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THE

Saturday Review of Literature

VOL. XXX No. 11 MARCH 15, 1947 FIFTEEN CENTS

Louise Field Cooper, author of "Summer Stranger." (See page 13)

The Last Time I Saw Berlin

By DOROTHY THOMPSON

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March 15, 1947

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lillian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXX, No. 11, March 8, 1947. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue, Copyright, 1947, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc. Registered United States Patent Office.

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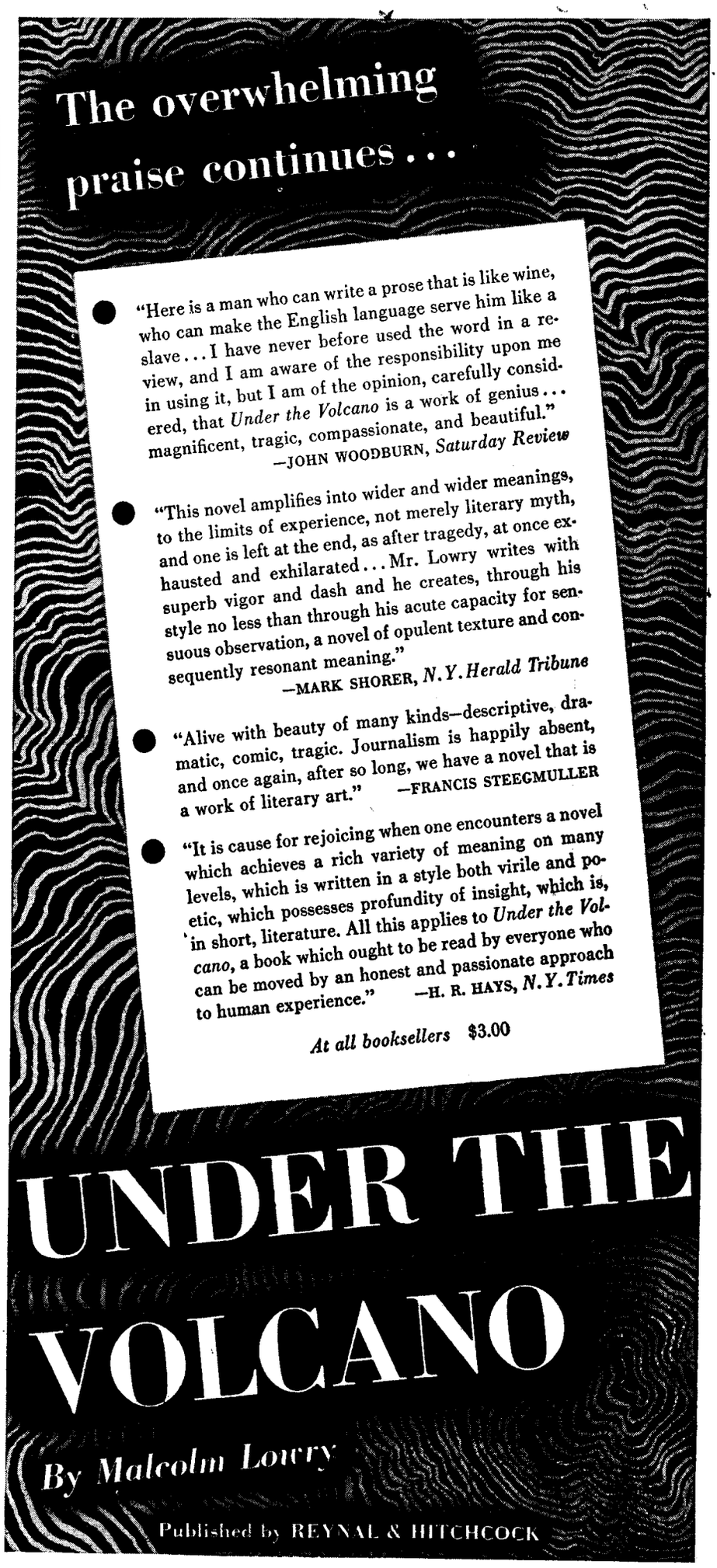
The overwhelming praise continues . . .
"Here is a man who can write a prose that is like wine, who can make the English language serve him like a slave . . . I have never before used the word in a review, and I am aware of the responsibility upon me in using it, but I am of the opinion, carefully considered, that *Under the Volcano* is a work of genius . . . magnificent, tragic, compassionate, and beautiful."
—JOHN WOODBURN, *Saturday Review*
"This novel amplifies into wider and wider meanings, to the limits of experience, not merely literary myth, and one is left at the end, as after tragedy, at once exhausted and exhilarated . . . Mr. Lowry writes with superb vigor and dash and he creates, through his style no less than through his acute capacity for sensuous observation, a novel of opulent texture and consequently resonant meaning."
—MARK SHORER, *N.Y. Herald Tribune*
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"It is cause for rejoicing when one encounters a novel which achieves a rich variety of meaning on many levels, which is written in a style both virile and poetic, which possesses profundity of insight, which is, in short, literature. All this applies to *Under the Volcano*, a book which ought to be read by everyone who can be moved by an honest and passionate approach to human experience." —H. R. HAYS, *N.Y. Times*
At all booksellers $3.00
UNDER THE VOLCANO
By Malcolm Lowry
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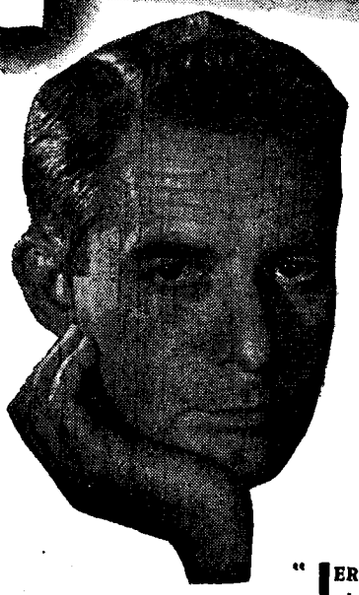

"PHILIP WYLIE writes as a jet-propelled Blake archangel might be expected to fly..."

"JEREMIAH was a murmurer and Tom Paine a journeyman tinker compared to Wylie when he attacks the forces that have bound mankind in moldy withes of sexual ignorance, infantile guilt and superstitious fear.... AN ESSAY ON MORALS is a grave work, and in places a disarmingly tender one."—HENRY MORTON ROBINSON, *Saturday Review of Literature*

"IT IS A SERIOUS and thoughtful attempt to get at the fundamental causes of our moral chaos through the illumination provided by modern Freudian psychology in general and Jung's conception in particular... There are splendid passages of eloquence and rousing indictments of contemporary institutions."—H. M. PARSHLEY, *N. Y. Herald Tribune Books*

"COPIES WILL BE SNITCHED from libraries by people determined to keep the book out of circulation. Undoubtedly a few at least will be burned. Parents will forbid their adolescent children to read it, the clergy will condemn it, timid college instructors will avoid mentioning it—and so it will be read by at least hundreds of thousands. Philip Wylie is a man trying to be honest. It is an arresting spectacle."—WENDELL JOHNSON, *The Chicago Sun*

An Essay on Morals

By PHILIP WYLIE

Author of GENERATION OF VIPERS

$2.50 *at all bookstores*

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TRADE Winds

SOME MALIGN INFLUENCE has revived the perennial interest in the question, "What's the longest word in the dictionary?" Robert Fuller, advertising manager of Merriam's, publishers of the Webster dictionaries, complains that in the past few months, over a hundred booksellers have bombarded him with the same query.

"Here," says Mr. Fuller with a once-and-for-all look in his eyes, "is my answer. Until a year ago it would have been honorificabilitudinitatibus, a pedantic nonsense word owing its inclusion in the dictionary to the fact that it was used by Shakespeare in 'Love's Labor's Lost.' Reference to the New Words Section of Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, however, reveals that this questionable honor has been captured by another word, a perfectly legitimate scientific term: pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis, meaning a form of pneumoconiosis occurring especially in miners, caused by the inhalation of very fine silicate or quartz dust." Now you know! . . .

THE SOCIALITE WIFE of a famous author was guilty of a Freudian faux pas at a literary reception recently. She attended very much against her will, but promised her anxious husband that she would be her most charming self. She was, too—until the very moment of departure, when she seized the hand of her hostess, and assured her warmly, "It was *so* nice of us to come!" . . . Another patroness of the arts found occasion to telephone a famous detective story writer. He picked up the receiver, and said, "Da*shiell* Hammett speaking." She corrected him sharply, "You mean *Dash*iell Hammett, don't you?" . . . A new whodunit specialist, incidentally, aiming for the Hammett-Chandler groove, is Michael Morgan. In "Nine More Lives," the bloody saga of a Hollywood stunt man, he tells how one prankster had a removable steering wheel put on his car, and fixed it so he could steer with his knees. He'd take a girl out for a ride, speed up to seventy, then suddenly detach the wheel and hand it to the terrified victim, saying calmly, "Here, *you* hold this for a few minutes!" . . .

ONE OF THE BEST of the new crop of mysteries is printed in type that is much too small. Since several publishers have been guilty of the same false economy (and they no longer can blame it on war shortages!) I think it would be unfair to single out one in print, but I can quote you a letter on the subject received by the author from his friend, Don Quinn:

> I bought your new book last night and I hope I'll enjoy it as much as I—and the world—did your last one. If I do, I'll have my seeing eye dog bring me over to tell you, and believe me, if I get through this book I'll need a hound with 20/20 vision and a tolerant disposition. I'd like to make a suggestion for future editions. Knopf used to do it and what has Knopf got that your publishers haven't except maybe Garamond and Bodoni? Here:
>
> A NOTE ON THE TYPE IN WHICH THIS BOOK WAS SET
>
> The type used in this volume is known, quite unfavorably, as ½-Point Myopia, and was designed in 1622 by Feodor Astigmatism, The Elder. It was deciphered in 1944 by means of the electron microscope and bids fair to become one of the most heartily disliked faces this side of Francisco Franco. We predict that it will be used extensively for engraving the text of Magna Charta on the edges of scalpels and to inscribe messages of love and devotion on gold toothpicks and stickpins presented to producers . . .

BEING THE KIND OF person who enjoys an occasional story about animals that can talk, read, and write, I had a very happy hour indeed with a little book called "Francis," by David Stern (Farrar, Straus). Francis is—or was—an army mule who had his own ideas about second lieutenants, and since they coincided remarkably with ones I cherished myself way back in 1918 at the IOTS, I found him a perfectly enchanting beast. My wife, however, who views tales of this description with a jaundiced eye, reminded me that I also had spoken highly of David Garnett's "Lady Into Fox," Ted Pratt's "Mr. Limpet," and the Jones's "Peabody's Mermaid." "You have been conditioned by all those confounded shaggy dog stories you collect," she diagnosed coldly. My answer, borrowed from a Jimmy Cagney picture, was a not-too-convincing "That's the kind of hairpin I am." How fortunate, I reflected, that I had read "Black Beauty" some little time before I was married—and given my copy of "The Autobiography of a Flea" to my snowbound Uncle Herbert in Vermont! . . .

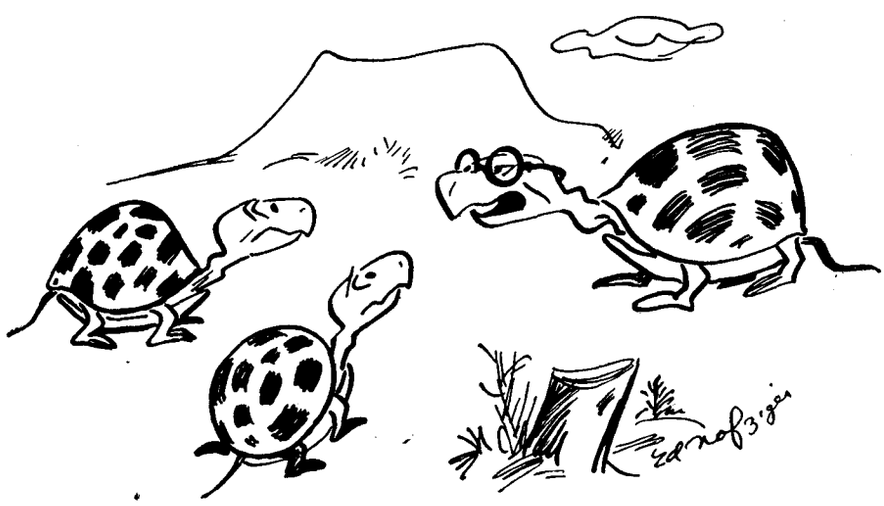
NATURAL SELECTION

By Richard Armour

The publisher riffles in the lukewarm
review
To find him a book-selling blurb
Consisting of adjectives three or two
To one paltry noun or verb.

Though many the words of another
stripe,
A flattering few he frisks.
What he wants, he prints in a bold,
black type,
What he doesn't he asterisks.

IN "THE HUCKSTERS," Fred Wakeman twisted a familiar proverb to read, "A thing not worth doing at all is not worth doing well." Dr. Morris Fishbein thinks Gypsy Rose Lee could give it an even better switch—to "a thing not worth undoing well is not worth undoing at all." The good doctor also tells of two fleas who shared Robinson Crusoe's island hut with him. The fleas engaged in a sprightly conversation, and when the time came for parting, one waved affably and said, "So long, kid. See you on Friday."... Funk & Wagnalls have picked the perfect editor for their new "Standard Handbook of Quotations"—a gentleman named Franklin P. Adams. Publi-



"Well, what are you staring at? They're *tortoise shell.*"

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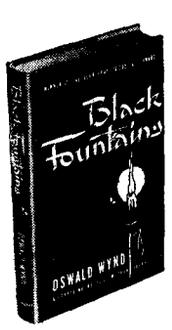
"From where I sit"

HAD a complaint the other day—a guy wrote that he was sore because I talked all about how Americans have to be loose and Irene Dunne and told him nothing about the book, *What D'Ya Know for Sure.* I suppose he thought I hadn't read the book and was just trying to bull along. I suppose I ought to alternate my columns—one column about the plot of the book, the next about authors and writing and sundry mondry and tuesdry.

But you take **Black Fountains** by OSWALD WYND and see what happens when you try to tell just the plot. Here we go. Omi Tetsukoshi, daughter of a prominent Japanese banker, returns home from America. She has become almost an American girl, and to her disgust, she finds her parents fast returning to the ceremonialism of the past. Her outspoken, Western ways require that she be exiled to a lonely mountain region near Kobe lest she bring disgrace and suspicion upon her whole family. While there. . . .

You see how it goes, just another book. You can read all about the plots of books by looking at the flaps when you are in a bookshop or lending library. The advertising spaces tell the same story in screaming headlines. Why should I triplicate?

Actually there are a lot of things about this $20,000 prize winning novel that have significance and interest outside of the mere recitation of the facts. A synopsis of the book shows nothing of the atmosphere of the book, the convincing detail, the complete familiarity with people and place which the author possesses, having lived in Japan two-thirds of his life. The author was born of Scotch parents in Tokyo on American Independence Day, 1913. His two sisters are American citizens, his brother a Canadian. WYND went to school in Japan, in Atlantic City, and finally at Edinburgh University. During the war he was a member of the Scots Guards, and later the British Intelligence in Malaya. He is now living in Edinburgh, but hopes to return to the Far East as roving correspondent. He says he will then attempt to add spoken Mandarin and Malay to his knowledge of Japanese. Now isn't this far more interesting than a plot summary? This author gets around. He writes well, he knows his subject thoroughly. The book is unusual. Don't you want to read it?



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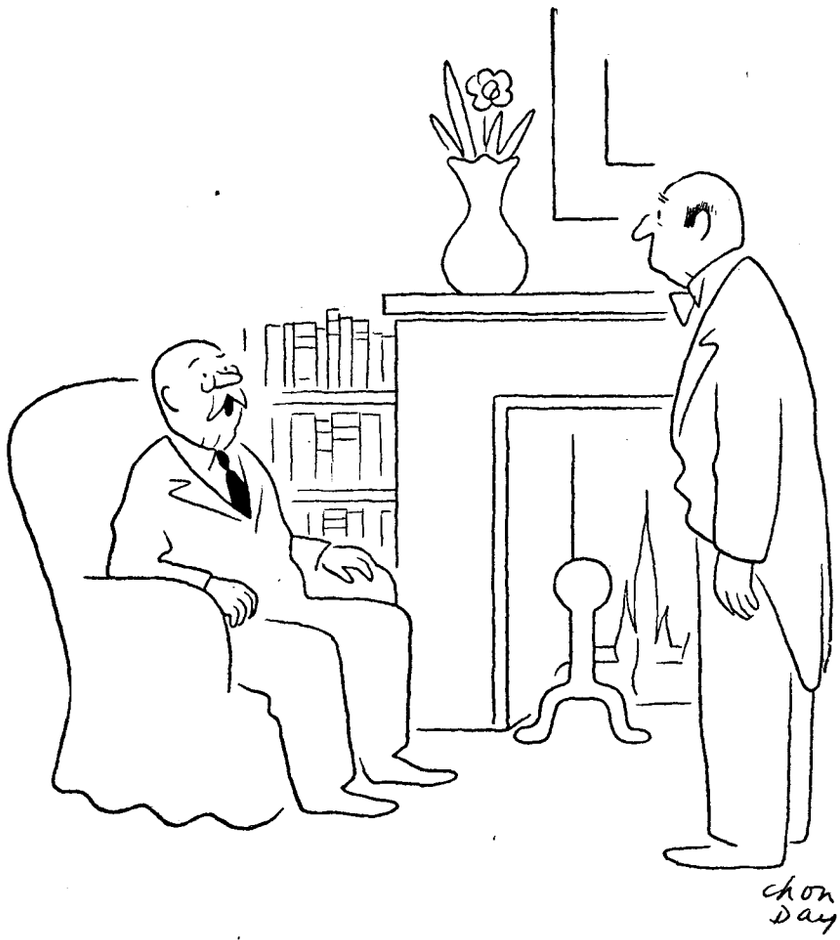
DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary



"Fetch me a grandchild, Roberts . . . I feel an object lesson coming on."

cation is scheduled for the coming Fall. . . . Tom Coward, paying tribute to the late Max Salop, who revolutionized the remainder book business in America, writes, "He and I bought together the publishing department of Brentano's. In the two or three years following, when we were actively selling or leasing plates and rights, somewhere between $50,000 and $100,000 must have been involved. Yet through the whole transaction there was never one line of writing to bind the contract—nor the slightest suspicion of a disagreement. He was a fine, generous man and we shall miss him very much." . . . Latest ABC circulation figures for the nation's ten most popular magazines (excluding digests) are: *Life,* 4,699,688; *Ladies' Home Journal,* 4,463,950; *Sat. Eve. Post,* 3,710,392; *Woman's Home Companion,* 3,691,238; *McCall's,* 3,586,333; *Collier's,* 2,809,341; *Woman's Day,* 2,800,939; *Good Housekeeping,* 2,794,565; *Better Homes and Gardens,* 2,644,722; *Farm Journal,* 2,540,092. . . .

DOCTORING AND STYLING manuscripts is only part of a conscientious editor's job; a great deal of his time must be spent in wet-nursing his authors in sickness and in health, listening to their intimate secrets and boastings, preventing them and their wives, often with extreme reluctance, from bashing each other's heads in with a fire tong.

One editor I know was deeply relieved to hear that a troublesome but famous author finally had decided to sue his wife for divorce, after a series of endless and sensational battles. The terms of the settlement were arrived at after negotiations that dragged on longer than the Nuremberg trials — and all through them the principals glared at each other with such maniacal hatred that the judge had them searched every morning for concealed weapons.

The wife had already signed the papers and the husband was flourishing his pen, when, to the editor's consternation, he stopped short and declared, "There's one thing more I must have—or it's no deal. My wife has a stickpin I insist upon having."

The wife said no. The judge ascertained that the pin was worth less than twenty dollars. "My dear friend," begged the editor, "do not sabotage this whole settlement, and find yourself still tied to a woman you loathe, for a measly, inexpensive stickpin! Why do you want it, anyhow?"

"You won't understand," brooded the author. "It's for sentimental reasons."

BENNETT CERF.

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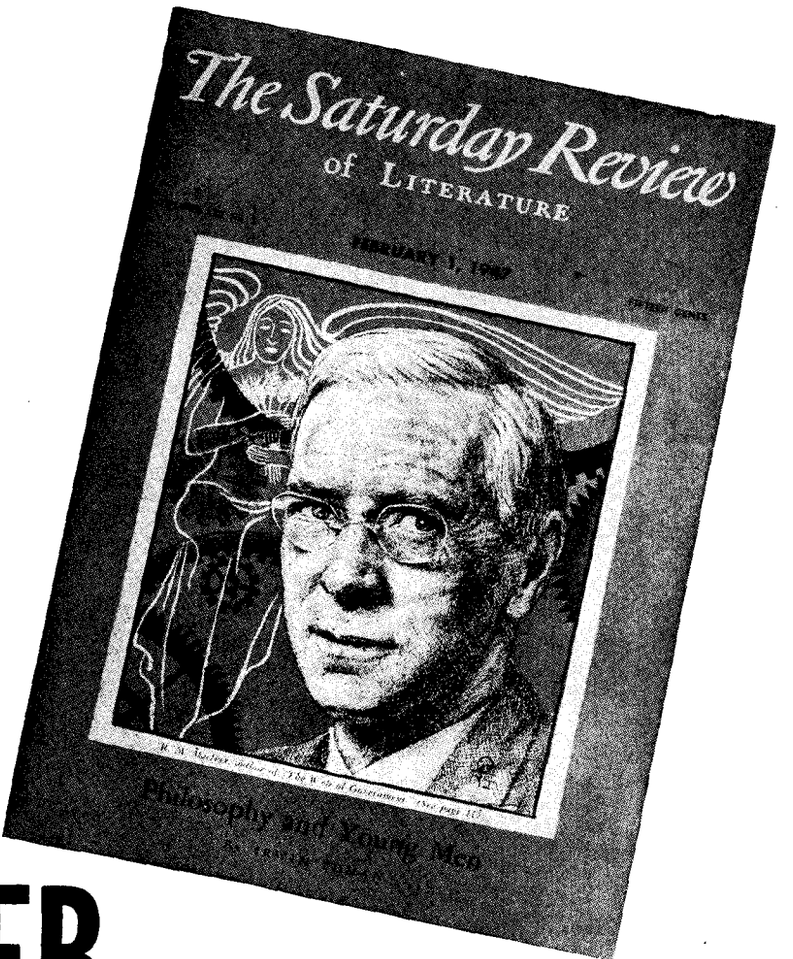
"A wise and provocative book"

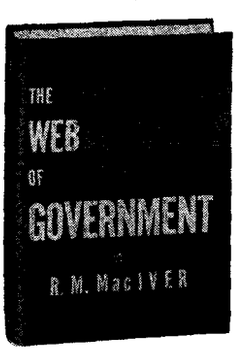
Thomas K. Finletter
NEW YORK TIMES

In the *Saturday Review of Literature*, T.V. Smith says of Professor MacIver's new book, "The background perspective . . . is rich. Few if any American social scientists command more of the materials of sociology, social anthropology, and psychology than does our author . . . solid in content, straightforward in style, fecund of perspective."



R. M. MacIVER

The WEB of GOVERNMENT



Americans, says Professor MacIver of Columbia, must develop an intelligent and *conscious* philosophy of government, because our philosophy (whether conscious or unconscious) is directly responsible for the kind of government we get. As a foundation for that philosophy, he analyzes the nature of the state, how it has evolved, and what its functions are. He asks the basic question, "Why do men set up ruling authorities, and why do they obey them?" He finds the answer in man's social nature, the myths that guide him, and the necessities of community life. Refusing to accept past assumptions at face value, he presents a new and original analysis of the evolution of authority. He offers a new classification of the various forms of government and describes the factors that cause political change. *The Web of Government* is a book for every intelligent American who takes his citizenship seriously.

$4.50 at your bookstore MACMILLAN

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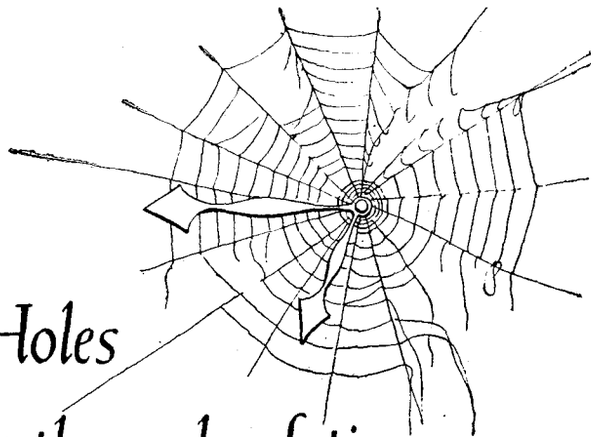

Holes in the web of time...

IT IS THE tragic destiny of the creative mind to be forever ahead of its time. If the gap between that mind and the time is not too wide, and if the force of the mind's idea is powerful enough, the time is pulled ahead to link with the mind . . . and a new era has begun. Usually, however, the heavy hand of the reluctant present keeps the creative mind from upsetting things too much, or even nudging them.

Sometimes desperate years go by before the age catches up with the man. We have not yet caught up with Nikola Tesla, whose experimental wireless power transmitter was destroyed, probably forever, during the first World War because the authorities were afraid of it; with Charles Fort, whose magnificent, roaring books have given Science its neatest hotfoot since Paracelsus; with Edgar Cayce, whose amazing career of psychic healing deserved more from medicine, for humanity's sake, than the stupid threats of "exposure", the grudging investigations, the silence.

Every now and then a novelist, or even a poet, joins this magic advance guard . . . and then we find ourselves trying to catch up with someone like William Blake, who is still about a hundred years ahead of us, or with Hermann Hesse, the neglected and forgotten author of twenty books, who finally won the Nobel Prize for Literature last year. In the case of Hesse, the catching up goes back twenty years, since his STEPPENWOLF, which Holt originally published and is now reissuing, was first printed in 1927, in the grim and embittered Germany that had lost the first World War and was beginning sullenly to plan for another. Hesse warned that Germany's sickness was a universal sickness, but the world paid no attention. Perhaps it is ready to listen now.

STEPPENWOLF is a novel . . . a strange and beautiful one. Not all of what it says to us can be expressed in words. In this, it is like other great novels—like *Moby Dick*, like *The Magic Mountain*, like *Penguin Island*. If it has a theme it is that man is nothing else than the narrow and perilous bridge between nature and spirit. But it is the overtones and undertones, the hidden and subtle meanings, the revelations, the discoveries, that make this story of Harry Haller one of the most extraordinary, surprising and stimulating of reading experiences.

As the story opens, Haller is wandering drunkenly around Berlin. He runs into a peddler selling a *Treatise on the Steppenwolf* and recognizes himself . . . a blend of human and wolfish traits . . . in the Steppenwolf The rest of the story moves in the twilight world between the conscious and the subconscious. It goes around the city to a tavern, a funeral, a professor's home, a masked ball, and the Magic Theater where one can split one's personality. There, Harry "pursued philosophy and music and had his fill of war . . . discussed Krishna with men of honest learning . . . loved Erica and Maria . . . became Hermine's friend . . . shot down motorcars or chased pedestrians, in the fearful war between men and machines . . . slept with the sleek Chinese . . . encountered Mozart and Goethe, and made sundry holes in the web of time."

In one sense, Harry Haller's story is the record of a journey through hell . . . "a sometimes fearful, sometimes courageous journey through the chaos of a world whose souls dwell in darkness, a journey undertaken with the determination to go through hell from one end to the other, to give battle to chaos." Whether Harry Haller wins that battle depends, oddly enough, on the reader. Thus the reader becomes the co-author of the story he is reading. Twenty years ago, STEPPENWOLF was ahead of its time. *And now?* What happens to us in the next twenty years hangs, threateningly, on the answer to that question.

Steppenwolf

AT ALL BOOKSTORES
HENRY HOLT & COMPANY

A NOVEL BY
Hermann Hesse
NOBEL PRIZE WINNER 1946
309 pages, $2.75

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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Last Time I Saw Berlin

DOROTHY THOMPSON

NO ONE knows, nor can he quite know, what is going on in the German mind, for no one except Germans have had their peculiar experience. The experience is in the nerves and the unconscious, and it is not communicable. In Berlin, for the first time since the war and for the first time since I said good-by, with the Gestapo's expulsion order in my pocket in 1934—I met the remnant of my old friends. But they were not the same friends — not the same people. They were very glad to see me, as I was glad to see them, and proud of them, too, for they had been among the resisters—not able to do much really; pitiable when you think how much they risked for so little possible accomplishment—but not believing, not going along with the hysteria, secure in their pessimism that what had started so badly would end worse, absolutely certain from first to last that Hitler would lose because Germany under Hitler had to lose. I think many conscious intelligent Berliners were like that. Berlin was never a Nazi town.

It was exciting to know, too, that we had not been wholly separated even during the war, for they had heard my "Listen, Hans" broadcasts. One was a widow. Her husband had been hanged by Hitler. One—a physician to whom I owe my life and the intimate friend of a resister who was hanged—had lived for a year and a half before the end of the war under the shadow of the Gestapo, reporting weekly and never knowing whether he would come out of the door he went in. One was a publisher who after a year and a half in concentration camp had been transferred to Moabit prison and sentenced to death, and then after standing eight hours half naked in a pouring autumn sleet had been set free—for no more reason than he had been arrested for. And at the point of death from penumonia he had lived through a direct bomb hit on the shelter of the Charlottenburg Hospital to which his wife had taken him. Another, a writer, had a Jewish grandfather whom the Nazis had never discovered. One was just a society woman, almost frivolously anti-Hitler, as a pure matter of taste. They had all held together during the war, in many groups, with many others, finding comfort in the silent communication of their hearts, no one caring about political parties or terms like "left" or "right." But that, they told me, was over now, since none of the conquerors knew how to discover and use their community of feeling while ambitious party leaders who had shot up like weeds out of the rubble were busy dividing the community of the decent as they had divided the Weimar Republic. The divisions between the Allies made it worse; so my friends had lost their unity to the various parties and conquerors and so had lost all they had —that inner tie of resistance in which there was warmth and no loneliness.

None of them knew of all that had gone on in the concentration camps, the gassing, for instance; but when it came out they were not surprised, nor shocked, either. For when you have lived through every kind of iniquity, through a total moral debacle, no new manifestation of that debacle is surprising. These were all highly civilized people; the unbridgeable chasm between myself and them was the chasm which would exist between people who had been to hell and those who had not, and who knew they were still in hell and probably you were, too, only you did not know it yet.

THERE we sat together, perfectly sane, discussing, since they were literary people, the tragically early death of Thomas Wolfe, the last days of the great painter Liebermann, the last novels—which they had not yet seen—of Thomas Mann; it was an effort to turn the clock back, back to 1934 when I was last in Berlin—and to take up the thread of an interrupted conversation. But we could not take up the thread really; for in no conversation before the great fall would a gentlewoman have spoken of the rape of her daughter, quite casually, as a somewhat upsetting but rather minor incident, fortunate on the whole because the raper had not been diseased, and there had been only one, not a dozen. Still, with this word or that, one could participate remotely in that twilight of the gods when the city came finally crashing down and the Russians, savage with combat, came through the shelters with flashlights at night picking their women and dragging them out, and by day plundering the shops with the Berlin mob joining them, women fighting with each other for strings of sausage or jars of marmalade, smearing jam like blood on each others' faces and in each others' hair, pairs of them tugging at sausages until they broke and both fell sprawling; women of the kind called "nice," led out weeping to be raped and returning at dawn drunken, laden with bottles and exuberant, because rewarded with the

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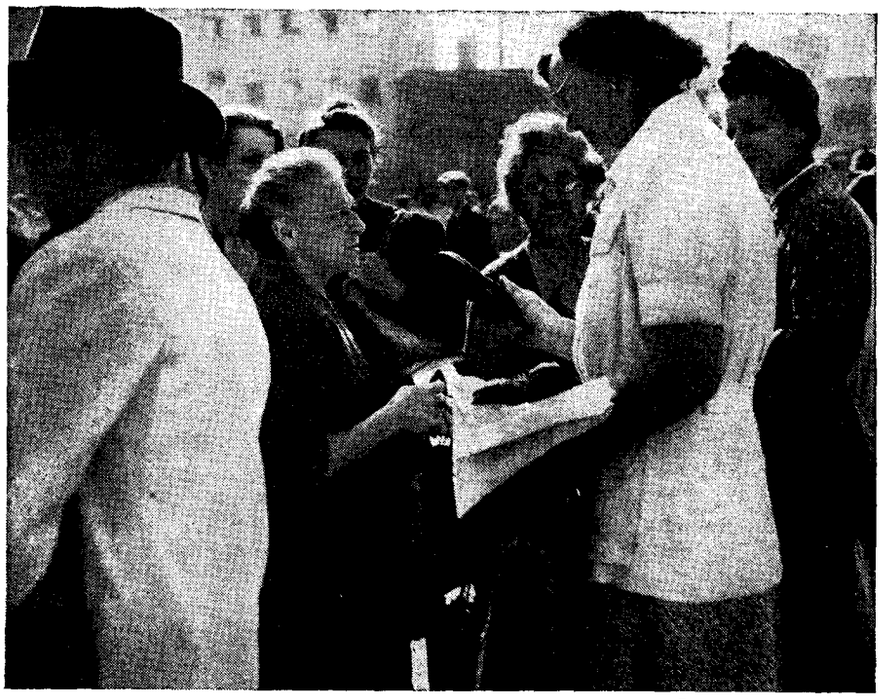

—*Press Association, Inc.*

German housewives bartering for shoes in a second-hand mart approved by the Allies to end such common sights as "women fighting for strings of sausage or jars of marmalade, smearing jam like blood on each others' faces . . ."

contents of a liquor shop. It is one thing to look at the pictures of Hogarth or of Goya and another to be participants in the pictures. It is one thing to believe that man can be wicked and another to come to the final awful conviction that God is dead. Only through a word here or there could you sense the disappointment—the final disillusionment—that the liberators did not appear as angels of life but as another set of characters in another act of the tragedy of doom.

When silence fell between us, as we sat together in fur coats and gloves in a heatless room drinking the Nescafé I had brought, I knew the silence was that which interrupts the conversations of worldly adults when a child appears. There was a politeness, not quite transparent, tendered to and sheltering one who had not yet lost her innocence.

WHEN I tried to discuss German politics I met a skeptical, half-pitying smile. Suddenly I realized that when God is dead there are no politics! My friends were Berliners. Berliners were always skeptical, and Hitler accused them of too much objectivity. But now the objectivity is total. My friends, I realized, have become spectators, spectators at the mounting, deepening drama of their own fate. They do not believe there is anything whatever that they can do about it, any more than one can do anything about a hurricane or an avalanche; any more than one can interrupt the terrible pure logic of a Greek tragedy; any more than one can overcome fate.

I saw my Berlin friends were no longer "Westerners," for they no longer believed in the power of the will against primordial evil and the great abyss. They were now protagonists in a drama, but as the ghosts, the symbols of themselves, themselves as puppets, who move on the stage while they really sit in the audience. They are on the stage, thus, in effigy, and the Russians, the British, the Americans, and the French are on the stage, too. It is only in Berlin and Vienna that a people have the opportunity to witness the behavior of four conquerors all at once, and there was never any theatre like that theatre. The Berliners are watching. They are watching the whole show. The Russians, Americans, British, and French whom they see are not the Russians Russians see, or the Britons Britons see, or the Americans Americans see, for we do not see our countrymen as conquerors. The Berliner sees them all and he draws his deductions, and his deductions confirm to him that God is dead. This is a searing enlightenment, and it is accompanied by a certain pleasurable intellectual elation, as discovery is always intellectually pleasurable even when what is discovered is very dreadful. The enlightenment the Berliner is suffering and enjoying is that which brings the ultimate liberation from all illusions as to the nature of man. Man, as the highly conscious Berliner sees him, is evil. It is an evil which is endemic, perpetual, and true. When the thin crust of civilization and its inhibitions is broken the true man—beast, raper, sadist, thief, plunderer—rushes forth, and he has joy that the crust is broken, and knows liberty beyond all liberties guaranteed by civil codes—for he has liberty from all codes.

All people when they throw off inhibitions do not behave in the same way. In four nations one sees ranges, varieties, and degrees of vices. The Russians give vent to barbaric animal actions, showing great capacity for not bad-natured murder; the Americans exploit to the fullest individual opportunities for making money out of need; the French reveal a meanness of nature as terrible as it is petty; the British lay tacit claim to be successors to the Master Race. Or at least, thus they appear to the Berliners. They do not think Germans are superior—oh, no. They think the Germans are awful. Only—they think the human race is awful. The human race, they think, is very low *en masse*. Only individuals rise above the masslowness. And not many individuals. Not themselves, for instance. They do not feel they have risen above the abyss. They have only not yet, as persons, fallen into it.

THE Berliners—to judge from my friends—may be outwardly servile or arrogant. But the spirit beneath the surface is one of mockery. The mockery denies the validity of all systems —communism, democracy, Christianity; for communism has appeared as rape, democracy as loot, Christianity as an unctuous hypocritical judge. The Berliner has not only learned to live almost without food, almost without shelter, he has also learned to live without faith and without hope. And he has therefore, probably more than anyone else, really achieved freedom from fear. For where there is no faith there is no fear of being deserted of God, and where there is no hope there is no fear of disappointment, and where there is neither faith nor hope there is no fear of death, for one lives in death already and in hell, too. What is left is a supreme position as spectator. The Berliner still occupies a proscenium loge at the drama of the fall of man.

And talking with my Berlin friends I saw they did not envy me. They pitied me because I still had so much to learn. I could see they were trying somehow to tell me what life was like on the other side, on the other side to which we all are heading—but they were not really trying, because obviously it was not communicable.

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The Arts in England: A London Letter

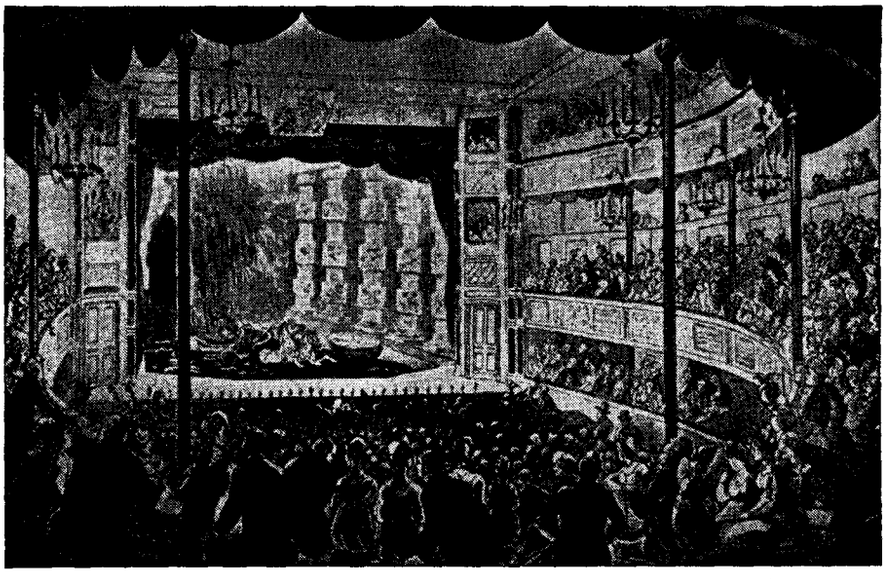
B. IFOR EVANS

IN May 1946 an American company came to London, to the New Theatre from which Laurence Olivier had just departed to the United States. The American company played Thornton Wilder's "Our Town." It was an excellent company and it had Marc Connelly as narrator, and yet the play fell fell flat. Theatre post mortems are usually altogether useless. But in this case it can be said that the failure lay neither with the author nor with the cast, but involved all that is most fundamental in English taste today. Wilder, for instance, is gathering life, propagation, and death into his scene. He muses on them philosophically as they can be seen in quiet sequence in the little town of Grovers Corners. It would be impossible to point to any work of the imagination published in England since the war which attempted to ferret out these major problems of life. Europe is faced with so many insolubles that such reflections seem impossible. You cannot any longer think on the old premises, and there is an iron curtain which prevents thought from discovering a new orientation. Fiction is too slow and philosophy too crystallized, but the arts that appeal to the eye and the ear are now triumphant. English audiences when they saw "Our Town" felt, subconsciously, that there was something altogether wrong in a company coming from the richest country in the world with properties that amounted solely to a few tables and chairs and umbrellas. A silly conclusion, of course, but the mind made it.

For in London it has been altogether otherwise. The great successes have been in the romantic tradition with color and costume and the mighty line supreme. So the Old Vic with Olivier and Richardson in Shakespeare's historical plays, and John Clements in "The King-Maker," a new play by Margaret Luce, which is a good play in itself, but apart from that is a feast of color in costume and setting for men and women conscious of an increasing shabbiness in a world of clothing coupons. The success of a most handsomely costumed version of "Lady Windermere's Fan" arose from the same cause. Nor is all the appeal to color at the crudest level. The long run of a poetic play, "The Way to the Tomb," showed that audiences enjoyed also the color and music of words. Music, certainly, has had a popularity unequaled in the history of England. The Albert Hall, enormous and ugly, and with poor acoustics, remains the one unbombed hall that will house a symphony orchestra, and night after night it has been crowded. Nor is the movement confined to London, for in the provinces music clubs have been formed with a strong membership and a determination to make music part of the communal life.

Most striking of all have been the reopenings of the centers of art which were closed during the war. Sadlers Wells started up again as early as the summer of 1945 with Benjamin Britten's "Peter Grimes" which announced the creation of a new English opera. It was in that same summer that the King and Queen came to the reopening of the National Gallery, and the masterpieces, which during the war had been hidden in caves in Wales, began to reappear. In a way the Gallery had never been closed. It had been used for midday workers' concerts, and one picture a month had been risked in London for the audiences to have something to see. So the English public, starved for great art during the war, began to look at the few pictures which were available with a closer and more genuine appreciation. London's gallery of modern art, the Tait Gallery, was badly blitzed and had to wait until 1946 for its reopening, over which Mr. Bevin presided. One of its earliest exhibitions was a collection of American pictures which drew very large audiences. Most memorable of all was the reopening of Covent Garden in February 1946. This Royal opera house had been a dance hall for troops during the war, but it had the good luck to remain untouched by enemy action. The red plush seats were still there and the pink lampshades. The Board of Trade had found it impossible to give the necessary coupons for those myriad little pink lampshades which had been traditional at the Garden, and so all the stage hands, cleaners, porters, carpenters offered their clothing coupons to the director so that the necessary silk could be bought. To walk up the grand staircase in an interval was to have a momentary illusion that peace had begun. The tiaras had gone and the evening dresses were scarce, but there was the air of a great occasion, and in the middle was Lord Keynes, the greatest patron the arts has had in this generation, the man who had made it all possible.

TO Covent Garden came the ballet, expanded from Sadlers Wells. Ballet has proved the supremely popular art in these years when the public has been starved for beauty. It makes a minimum demand on the intelligence, and seldom teases one into thought, despite Robert Helpmann's experiments in choreography such as "Miracle in the Gorbals." England has supported, apart from the ballet at Covent Garden, another company at Sadlers Wells, and the itinerant Ballet Rambert. Further, not one of these ballets plays to an empty seat. As if its desires for ballet were insatiable,



Sadlers Wells—darkened periodically since it was built in 1760 (as shown here)—rewoke to new life right after V-E Day, to function as a theatre *for the people* in accordance with its long and robust tradition.

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London has also given a big welcome to companies from Paris, the United States, and Java.

I do not mean with all this that these years have seen nothing new in literature, but that there has been nothing in literature comparable in achievement with the theatrical productions and the ballet and music. Whether it can last remains one of the great problems before England at the present day. In part it has been made possible by the fact that during the war, for the first time in England, the state has supported the arts through C.E.M.A. (Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts). The grant from the Government was a small one, and the aim was severely practical: to help artists who were without employment and to bring the arts to workers engaged in factories in remote places. But the right people entered the movement and it grew. Above all the right officials got in who knew the difference between an artist and a bureaucrat. Without being too theoretical or solemn they saw a chance of helping the arts permanently. They saw that the state had done an imaginative thing, almost by accident. They were determined that the maximum benefits should be derived from it. The presence of Lord Keynes in the Treasury as an unofficial adviser and at the same time as chairman of the Arts Council, helped enormously. Keynes before his death made one or two good statements about the whole matter, and they were all the more effective because he was not a sentimental man. In one he said that we must try to get the economic side of life set right so that the human mind may return to the arts and the life of the spirit which are its proper preoccupations. On another occasion, pleading that art should not be centralized but that each locality should develop in its own way, he said:

> How satisfactory it would be if different parts of the country would again walk their several ways as they once did and learn to develop something different from their neighbors and characteristic of themselves. Nothing can be more damaging than the excessive prestige of metropolitan standards and fashions. Let every part of Merry England be merry in its own way.

The Arts Council developed a system by which Covent Garden, Sadlers Wells, the Old Vic, the symphony orchestras, and a number of like undertakings were made into "non-profit-making" institutions which could receive grants from the Arts Council. These were not large payments, but they were sufficient to encourage bolder policies, and in the theatre some very notable productions. For instance,

the Old Vic had quite substantial guarantees from the Arts Council, but so successful were their productions that they called on only about a tenth of these, and then for special wartime emergencies. This association with the Arts Council also permitted the companies to avoid the punitive entertainment tax on all theatre seats.

So far it has all worked, and in the confused political and domestic scene the arts have not only survived but have become more popular than ever before. It remains to be seen what will happen once the wartime starvation for the arts has been appeased. Further, we shall be forced, some day, to wake up and see Europe as it is. Some imaginative writer will rediscover Europe, and then perhaps the history plays, the Shakespeare, and the beauties of "The Sleeping Princess" and "Giselle" will prove quite inadequate. Meanwhile we have not had enough.

B. Ifor Evans is principal of Queen Mary College of the University of London, and an occasional contributor to The Observer.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

NUMBERS IN POETRY

Frances Lee McLean of Lexington, Ky., asks you to fill in the numbers which are missing from these twenty familiar quotations. Allowing four points for each one correctly supplied, a score of sixty is par, seventy-two is very good, and eighty-four or better is excellent. Answers are on page 33.

1. She had .... lilies in her hand,
   And the stars in her hair were ....
2. How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of Youth,
   Stolen on his wing my .... and .... year!
3. The night has .... eyes,
   And the day but ....
4. .... be the things I'd been better without.
5. Into the valley of Death rode the ....
6. Is this the face that launched .... ships?
7. .... if by land, and .... if by sea.
8. The morning's at ...., the hill-side's dew-pearled.
9. It ran .... years to a day.
10. Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
    Lie in .... words.
11. Then come kiss me, sweet and ....,
    Youth's a stuff will not endure.
12. It looked extremely rocky for the Mudville nine that day;
    The score stood .... to .... with but one inning left to play.
13. Beneath the crisp and wintry carpet hid
    .... buds but stay their blossoming.
14. They took some honey and plenty of money
    Wrapped up in a .... pound note.
15. When what to my wondering eyes should appear
    But a miniature sleigh and .... tiny reindeer.
16. I keep .... honest serving men:
    They taught me all I knew.
17. .... men on the dead man's chest.
18. Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
    .... fleets sweep over thee in vain.
19. The many men, so beautiful!
    And they all dead did lie:
    And .... slimy things
    Lived on; and so did I.
20. Quick was the little Maid's reply,
    "O Master! we are ...."

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The Beach-Wagon Set

SUMMER STRANGER. By Louise Field Cooper. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 261 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY C. BENÉT

WHY are there more English women writers who do good light novels than American ones? Louise Field Cooper helps to bring up our average here, for "Summer Stranger" is an excellent study of summer resort life, done with meticulous detail, unexpected depth, and a surprise in the way of a grim ending.

The place is probably Black Point, near New London, here called Flanders Point. With a few geographical changes, it could be Stonington or Watch Hill or any summer colony with a beach that juts into the North Atlantic. It will remind you of the one with which you are most familiar. Miss Cooper knows life there down to the last grain of sand. This is summer calm, with undercurrents of emotion, ending with a storm. Not literally a hurricane as in "The Sudden Guest," but an emotional storm.

Flanders Point is full of smug summer people from New York who "have always gone there" and pride themselves, in an inverted form of snobbery, on their extreme simplicity. We see it all through the eyes of seventeen-year-old Emily, whose poignant situation reminded me of "Alice Adams."

Emily is both impecunious and from Bridgeport and therefore does not fit in with the bright younger set at all. She is a poor relation of the Hallocks—Aunt Isabel and Uncle Joseph—and has been imported to "make herself useful in little ways till after Labor Day," with the reward promised that Uncle Joseph will then send her to secretarial school in the fall. She is in an anomalous position, being neither servant nor guest, yet a little of both. The young group, with unerring cruelty, sense this and make her suffer. She wears the wrong kind of sneakers and a tin barrette they hate! "Emily never forgot the morning she met the young people." Neither does the reader.

To add to Emily's worries, all is not well in the Hallock family, and here our light comedy takes on the shadow of tragedy. Aunt Isabel, accustomed to having her own way, battles with poor Uncle Joseph, her deaf, stubborn, but kindly husband. The only things that Aunt Isabel really loves are cake, book-club selections, and her son who will benefit by Uncle Joseph's death. What happens you must read—but both Aunt Isabel and Uncle Joseph are excellently and convincingly drawn. So is the local taxi-driver lady and other minor characters. The young crowd is a particularly good job—saying "That's neat," and led by a vixen named Tinky. There is always a Tinky. (Here I checked with their contemporaries, who voted them *marvelous.*)

—*From "Contemporary American Painting."*

"Algira and Anna," by Waldo Peirce.

The only one who didn't ring true to me is the handsome Greek vegetable-truck driver who snares Emily's affections. All the rest, the genteel "white-hatted women who looked exactly alike," the settlement of long white houses with high privet hedges, even what falls under the bathhouse floors at Flanders Point is presented with great accuracy and clarity.

And then that typical local attitude:

> Aunt Isabel felt their all having come there so many years was what had gradually and inevitably built the place up to its present peak of quiet perfection. Nobody could want any nicer place to spend the summer; nobody. Occasionally a family might appear in their midst from some other city than New York, once even from quite far away, somewhere in Ohio as she recalled—but they seldom stayed long. They might even rent one of the few houses that could be rented and might even—it had happened—buy a house, but then in five years or ten, that house would be on the market again and nobody was ever surprised. "Not gay enough for them here," the seasoned Flanders Pointers would point out to each other with satisfaction. "Too quiet altogether," they would add contentedly. "Much!"

The author's eye is as keen as her ear is acute for conversation.

It is too bad that "Summer Stranger" appears in March for it would be perfect for summer reading. Old and young will like it equally and be amused—and more than just amused. My advice is to read it now, and then take it to your hostess when you go to Flanders Point—near Flanders Centre—to visit next summer.

THE AUTHOR: For ten years, Louise Field Cooper, a fragile-looking woman who speaks very rapidly in a cool, low voice, has been writing gently-bred, double-take vignettes for *The New Yorker.* Most of these are inspired by peaceful, suburban Woodbridge, Conn., where she and her lawyer husband live with two sons, a daughter, and a family of ducks. When they go driving, their Great Dane, mallards, and a few bantam hens surrounding the hospitable Cooper home pile in. "Helga," the maid featured recently in a tale about an alcoholic cook, is part of the menage, but, says Mrs. Cooper, "I still do plenty of housework." Writing mornings, "theoretically from 9:30 to 12:30," "Summer Stranger" took three years. "I've always been fascinated by the intensity of life in a seashore colony during the season," she explains. Mrs. Cooper won a $50 prize for her first story, published in *Junior League Magazine* about twenty years ago. After graduation "from a very easy boarding school," she worked on a newspaper in her native Hartford, where she "didn't really write anything—just social notes." Her family did not read these prose works; it disagreed with the paper's politics. Then she assisted a local book shop owner, Edwin Valentine Mitchell. Before Pearl Harbor, the Coopers vacationed abroad. Now they're anxious to visit "two big English girls" who, instead of the little boy they requested of Oxford, spent four war years with them. Her other books include "The Deer on the Stairs," "The Lighted Box," and "Love and Admiration."

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Fighting Man or Stuffed Goose?

DOPPELGANGERS. By H. F. Heard. New York: The Vanguard Press, Inc. 1947. 218 *pp.* $2.75.

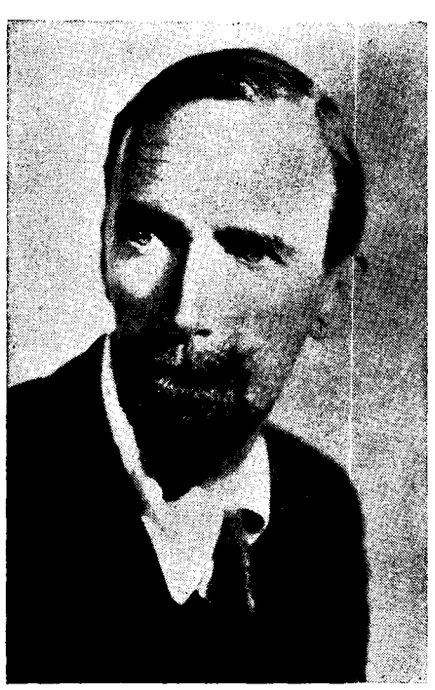
Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

THE mind of Mr. H. F. (Gerald) Heard, an intellectual Englishman, now living in Hollywood, is composed of strange and apparently contradictory elements, making of him one of the most fascinating writers now extant. He is a profound student of historical movements who has contributed long essays on the civilizations in which the fate of man is embedded like a fly in amber. He has sufficient knowledge of the more startling developments of modern science, a fine taste for the macabre, and he can write a terrifying mystery story that will haunt you for a long time. With all of these gifts he is obviously trying in his latest book to direct the attention of men who still wish to have freedom of choice in their economic and political lives to the dilemmas with which they are faced today. The result is a thoroughly exciting and stimulating book, combining a horror story, a political and philosophical treatise, a study of modern revolutions, with other elements that made Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World" a gruesome satire on what man's life might be like if a police dictatorship were ever run by cold-blooded scientists. Granted that it takes a certain amount of curiosity about the future and an interest in man as a political and social animal to take pleasure in this glittering amalgam. Nevertheless with that much mental endowment there can be few readers who pick up this strange and terrible book who will not find it as repellently fascinating as the discovery of a cobra in one's bed.

Imagine that an outwardly benign dictatorship rules most of the world at the end of this century. The great wars, instruments of revolution, are over, perhaps forever. Man at last sees the folly of the pursuit of happiness through religious and imperial wars or through the political and economic revolutions that have swept our modern world. In Mr. Heard's own words, "After the scatterer comes the gatherer . . . the Economic Revolution made by the thyroid-pituitary type had to pass. When old Stalin brought back the ballot and then the Church, people said, 'and now we are back at democracy, nationalism, and orthodoxy.' But there is no going back. He was simply handing back the cards to the force we call Nature that THAT might deal them for the fourth hand. Hence we come to the fourth revolutionary phase which closes the revolutionary cycle."

The dictatorship into which the people of the book are born is as rigid as the steel fetters, deceptively concealed in silk and velvet, that bind them to the central authority. It has been discovered that the way to rule people is to stuff them with contentment, to gently force down their throats bread and circuses and luxury, to grease them with pleasure until they waddle about as cheerful, witless, and sleek as so many Strasbourg geese. When men arise with frowning foreheads, to invent political, religious, or economic theories and become consequently men of action they are quietly disposed of, or an operation or two is performed on their brains or their organs to make them mental or physical eunuchs. Either that or they go literally underground and dart forth regimented to murder and havoc. Monstrous hypnotizing performances are given by the state with all the art that magic and science can devise so that the ruler, whose name is neither Steel nor Bronze, but Alpha is worshiped like a god and, is wafted into the heavens in an enormous and glittering penumbra. The violent and murderous creature who rules the underground is, of course, Omega, "The Mole."

The story that threads this imaginative fantasy, or allegory, deals with a young man with a Protestant soul who has become an enemy of the state. When the danger and violence in which he lives wearies him, he attempts to escape, is caught and transformed by brilliant surgery, literally carved, into the living image of Alpha himself. When Alpha, instead of having him killed as a nuisance, makes him his slave-companion, his other self, his "Doppelganger," so that he may be freed from the intolerable burden of public ceremonies and appearances, the plot is completed. But destiny takes a hand in this strange story so that when Alpha, the all-wise inventor of mass euphoria, is slain by his shadow, the shadow in turn becomes the substance of the power and glory of the world. The Mole and the dangerous underground are conquered, and mankind is ready once more for another stride forward into space.



Readers will find H. F. Heard's "strange and terrible book as repellently fascinating as the discovery of a cobra in one's bed."

Mr. Heard has been curiously successful in creating suspense and excitement throughout this involved and imaginative tale. The long soliloquies of Alpha and the philosophic stream of the author's thought do not interrupt, as Christopher Isherwood says, "a mood of extremely subtle fear and tension." The author does not fall into the error of most utopian novels in permitting the mechanical contrivances of the future to encumber his story. This world of 1997 he has invented does not seem too unreasonable; men do not float in space or summon spirits from the vasty deep, they walk and dance and ride in cars and planes as we all do today. What is horrible about the story is that the philosophy of revolution behind it might well be true. Perhaps when we have stopped tearing humanity to pieces with wars and revolutions, have found comfortable homes for human beings, good food for their bellies, furs and clothes for their backs, and have supplied them with all of the mechanical marvels that science can invent for their comfort and relaxation, we will have a world stuffed with stupefying happiness. Perhaps the mind and heart of man can be tamed, made bland and neuter, suffocated with sugar, drowned in pap. Perhaps this country which excels the world in manufacturing the kind of euphoria that can delight a woman's soul with a new icebox will be the first to achieve this terrifying millennium. If this nightmare should have any actuality, let us prepare to go underground before long, we who feel ourselves free men, and consort with mad revolutionists and destroyers and with all of the devils out of hell, rather than to see our descendants turned into strutting and obscene mannikins, the regimented slaves of the authoritarian machine.

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Deep in the Heart of Malaya

DAVID AND ANNA. By Robert Payne. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1947. 262 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by NANCY GROBERG CHAIKIN

MR. PAYNE'S ripple in the literary stream gets bigger and bigger. "Forever China" and "Torrents of Spring" having already made their sizable circles, along comes "David and Anna" now, and we are told that he has three or four more books in the offing for this year. Whereas "Forever China" revealed a mind profoundly sensitive to the qualities and the potentialities of modern China, this latest book takes us, no less competently and keenly, into the heart of Malaya with the story of David, an English rubber planter, and Anna, his beautiful bride of mixed blood. Certainly if Mr. Payne has concocted anything noteworthy in his new novel, it is atmosphere; the story of these two is literally saturated with it, and, fortunately for Mr. Payne and his readers, atmospherically he concocts extremely well. Whether or not we are going to be impressed with his story and theme, we cannot escape the impact of his scene, nor the richness of his prose.

But even as we hand to Mr. Payne the proverbial cake for his understanding of Malaya and its tradition, we think twice about giving it away for his people, his examination of motives and values, his ability to root them firmly in the story and effect his changes inevitably through their personalities. A cookie, perhaps, but not the cake. For, somehow, he does not succeed in clarifying those people, in vitalizing them, in making them matter. David is a pantheist, after a fashion, and I suppose that the core of his beliefs, as they are born in Malaya, may be surmised from the following speech to a snobbish Dutchman, a fellow-planter:

> The world is on the march, the nations have struck their tents and nothing will change the fact that soon—much sooner than you expect—there will be only one nation. We shall become all race. We are all nomads now. Soon we shall have wandered so long that there will be no trace of our original stock.

But David never says very much more about it, and it is his Malayan slave, Daimalen (certainly a stronger figure in the book), who takes up his theme, and the theme of the story, in its final page. No indeed, the reader cannot be satisfied with the development of this David, nor of his noble theme; and if he is rather weakly drawn, Anna, her sister Teresa, and the two sons are even weaker. Fictionally I should say that this was poor work.

There are some very fine passages in this novel, and a good deal of writing to indicate that Mr. Payne meant to say and could have said a lot more than comes through. His theme emerges convincingly in very rare moments and, somehow, nothing seems to tie up as it should—a puzzling state of affairs which is exemplified by the dubious relevancy of the Biblical quotation which prefaces and reappears in his story. Yet we cannot help loving the book—for its fantastic tiger hunt, for the slow, steady infiltration of warm, Malayan mists, for its careful, perfect language, for its complete mastery of the atmosphere of the place, its deep look into it. I can only wish that Mr. Payne had looked as deeply into his people—that the truth and the vitality of the story had not, in fact, been sacrificed to the amorous and fantastic treatment of the setting. I cannot help wishing that I did not feel mildly frustrated—as if, by clearing away some of the mist, I might see it all clearly, as if, by groping my way carefully through, I might at last find myself as deep in a beautiful story as I am in Mr. Payne's bright, warm Malaya.

Robert Payne, concocter of atmosphere.

Dolce Far Niente

HOTEL VESUVIUS. By Johan Fabricius. Translated by M. S. Stephens. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1947. 240 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE GRANT WHITE

THIS light novel about Capri makes pleasant reading. It is well translated from the Dutch, and illustrated by pen-and-ink sketches by the author. Most of the action takes place in the Albergo Vesuvio, a small hotel which serves as a familiar device to achieve unity. The time is 1939.

With the possible exception of the histrionic surrender of the island to Lieut. Comdr. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., USNR, in the last war, little of consequence has occurred on Capri since the time of Tiberius. Consistently, little of consequence happens in the novel under discussion. It is like an agreeable one-act Italian operetta, containing the usual elements of love and intrigue. Renato (obviously the tenor in our operetta), is a handsome, impecunious, futile young fascist who emulates the exploits of Don Juan and Casanova on a reduced scale. His victims are the unattached females of assorted nationalities who arrive on the boat from Naples. His technique, aided by his melting eyes and his entire wardrobe of one black uniform, is flawless; he is a thoroughgoing rotter, and his character is only too well drawn. The leading soprano is Mädl, a blonde German girl he picks up in Naples, literally at the drop of a handkerchief. Thanks to a spot of blackmail, he is momentarily in funds, which are soon fruitlessly spent in entertaining Mädl. She promises, however, to meet him in Capri the next day. But war breaks out suddenly, and she is carried off intact by her brother-in-law to Germany. This is the main theme of the libretto, engagingly set forth. There are the necessary complications, provided by the supporting cast, and the political situation. As in all operettas, there is the inevitable chambermaid, who falls for Renato. In the final scene, everybody turns upon Renato, who finds that the Vesuvio is too hot to hold him. As the curtain falls, life in the hotel is getting back to normalcy: the chambermaid and her donkey-boy are singing a soft duet about starting a ristorante of their own; Renato has fled to Naples to enlist in the Duce's African army, but on second thought decides to continue his amorous career by meeting the Capri steamer at the other end of its run.

You can probably find him there on the dock today, with his hair dyed, on the lookout for middle-aged widows.

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Victims of Wrong "Social Origins"

THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON. Anonymous. With a preface by T. S. Eliot. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 299 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by VARIAN FRY

ONE of the most striking paradoxes of the age in which we live is the fact that, at a time when man's methods of communicating news and ideas have become incalculably more numerous, more rapid, and more certain than they have ever been before, there should be a large part of the world which is almost completely cut off from the rest, a part from which little news ever comes, and to which no news not approved by the relatively small group of men who rule that vast territory ever penetrates. Mr. Winston Churchill has vividly characterized its plight by saying that it lies behind an iron curtain. The anonymous author of the present book has described it with equal vividness by calling it "the dark side of the moon"—the side that no man has ever seen.

Yet there are important differences between the side of the moon which is always turned away from the earth and the part of the world which is governed directly or indirectly from Moscow. The one is not only invisible; it is also unattainable and uninhabitable. The other is both attainable and, for the most part, habitable. Indeed it is inhabited, not only by the millions of human beings who have had the fortune or misfortune to be born in it, but also by those millions who have been forcibly carried off from their homes and compelled to exist in its prisons and concentration camps. And occasionally some of these human beings manage, in one way or another, to get away, bringing with them, if not news, at least a little information about the conditions they observed or were forced to endure there.

Of all these victims of the Russian communist brand of fanaticism, no group has been larger, and none, surely, has suffered more horribly than the millions of Poles who were uprooted from their homes and shipped off to unknown destinations in Central and Eastern Asia during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact of friendship after 1939. "The Dark Side of the Moon" constitutes a fitting memorial to their almost incredible ordeal. It also throws a brilliant and much-needed beam of light on some of the darkest corners of the land behind the iron curtain.

A large part of the book consists of statements by the victims themselves, simple, unadorned accounts of how they were rounded up, often in the middle of the night, by NKVD agents, marched under armed guard to waiting trains, packed, literally, into cattle cars, locked in, and transported for days and nights—generally without adequate food, frequently without drinking water, and always without any toilet facilities better than a hole cut in the floor—until those who were still alive finally reached their destination, where they were again marched under guard to prison, concentration camp, or "lagier"—forced labor centers.

Once arrived, they were either kept waiting for days and months in dark and dirty cells or were forced to do impossible amounts of heavy and degrading labor. There was never enough food, and even the woefully short rations which were allowed them were further reduced if they failed for any reason to perform the established "norms" of work. In some cases they were shot on the spot when no longer able to carry out their onerous tasks. In others they were left to die in their cells or barracks or primitive huts, of disease, old age, or exhaustion, generally without any medical care at all, and always without the solace of their religion, so important to the Catholic Poles. When the Hitler-Stalin pact was finally broken, they were eventually freed, but before many of them could return to civilization they found themselves declared Soviet citizens, and the iron curtain closed on them.

Readers who may be inclined to doubt the evidence of this book should reflect that it has the unqualified endorsement not only of Mr. T. S. Eliot but also of Mrs. Helen Sikorska, widow of the late General Wladislaw Sikorski. In her brief introductory note, Mrs. Sikorska says that many of the documents used were made available to the author from the official files of the Polish Government, at the direction of her husband. And it is only too evident why that author—a woman—felt obliged to maintain anonymity: doubtless she still has relatives and friends in Poland and the Soviet Union today, and certainly she knows only too well what savage reprisals they would suffer if it were known that they had contributed, even unwittingly, to the building up of her case histories.

The whole hideous story she tells reminds one strikingly of the much better publicized forced migrations and concentration camps of the Nazis, and suggests that in this respect as in so many others the Nazis merely copied or perfected the brutal methods of the Communists. Of course the Russians did not single out Jews for their attentions: their victims were all people of the wrong "social origins," that is, everybody but members of the *Lumpenproletariat.* Of course, too, the Russians did not quite descend to the bestiality of gas chambers and other "modern" methods of extermination. But the differences are far less significant than the similarities. They are differences of emphasis and method, not of purpose. Both parties proved themselves equally capable of unlimited cruelties on a vast scale, and both showed that they had an equally complete contempt for the lives of individual human beings, for their rights, and for all the gentler human feelings.

It is much too much to hope, I am afraid, that American liberals of the left will benefit from reading "The Dark Side of the Moon." For they are as wilfully blind to the uglier side of Russian Communism as the American Bundists were to the evil aspects of German National Socialism. Doubtless they will call the whole thing a vicious fabrication and denounce it as a typical piece of Polish anti-Russian propaganda. But on those of us who have not yet enlarged our definition of democracy to include one form of dictatorship, the book cannot fail to make a profound impression. Its sincerity is too evident, its restrained eloquence too convincing, to leave any doubts in our minds of its essential truth. It is one of the most terrible indictments of a tyrannical government ever written.

Varian Fry, vice-president of Cinemart, Inc., wrote "Surrender on Demand" to describe his thirteen months in Vichy France with the Emergency Rescue Committee, releasing notables, among them Franz Werfel and Lion Feuchtwanger. He is a former editor of Commonsense Magazine.

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Van Loon Adds Up His Score

REPORT TO SAINT PETER. By Hendrik Willem van Loon. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1947. 220 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ARTHUR C. FIELDS

THE ramblings of a man reflecting on a life of some three-score years lived in an age of revolution and misdirected political reformations make interesting reading at a time when humanity is faced with manifold problems. "Report to Saint Peter" is a fragment of such a backward glance, and although the first eleven years of Hendrik Willem van Loon's life may not prove very illuminating to a world ready to plunge into the abyss, nevertheless it is a reflection of the past as seen through the eyes of a chatty, fatherly historian who loved living only slightly more than he hated Adolph Hitler's Nazi movement.

"Report to Saint Peter" seems to have been the final resolution of a number of problems that had beset Van Loon in his last days. Profoundly affected by the letters he received from servicemen all over the world ("and many of them . . . so pathetically young—mere kids"), he decided that once and for all he would answer their oft-repeated question that ran something like this: "You have now told us all about the arts (or geography, or history, as the case may be . . .). Now will you please and in very simple words and pictures tell us what this world is all about?"

To the fidgety reader, unwilling to wade through pages of disorganized "asides," Mr. Van Loon's book may prove disappointing. Wandering all over Rotterdam, going back to the early history of the Roman Empire, coming up to the recent atrocities of Nazi barbarism, turning aside to discuss the history of autobiography, the story advances and cuts back like a hesitant, skittering colt. But to those who realize that here is a man writing of the errors of his life, perhaps his failure to organize his work may be forgivable in view of the fact that he writes of a life too full for rigid systematization.

"Report to Saint Peter" is the autobiography of a man deeply steeped in history. Occasionally, Mr. Van Loon flaunts his background a trifle too flagrantly in the reader's uninitiated face; but even then, he redeems himself with a fatherly bit of whimsy. 'I feel about astrology," he says, "the way I do about palmistry, numerology, bibliomancy, sciomancy, haruspicy, myomancy, orniscopy, geomancy, gastromancy, stichomancy, dactyliomancy, capnomancy, and progressive education."

As to the accuracy of his facts, Mr. Van Loon points out that

> Some people firmly maintain that they could read their Bible at the age of three and could write a passable letter at the age of four. There are large numbers who were able to play difficult musical compositions before they had ever learned their letters or their notes. There are those who distinctly remember fires which, according to our chronologies, took place a number of years before they were born. . . . How far do [my earliest recollections] bear any resemblance to the actual truth, and to what extent are they the result of something somebody told me years afterwards . . . which I have so thoroughly incorporated into my own mental scrapbook that I have since come to accept them as the gospel truth?

This fragment of an autobiography, wandering and untamed as the soul of which it writes, is a friendly hand extended in the darkness. It is the beginning of a great attempt to "tell us what the world is all about." It is also a man's attempt to justify the life he has lived to a kindly old gentleman, standing by a pearly gate, an old friend of the family, Saint Peter.

A Well of Good Native Writing

THE PURPLE TESTAMENT. Life Stories by Disabled War Veterans. Edited by Don M. Wolfe. Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Sons. 1947. 361 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN FARRAR

THIS is a triumphant book. I wish every reader of *The Saturday Review* would buy it, read it, and write a letter to at least one of the fifty-three disabled veterans who contributed to its pages. This would not be a do-good process, in the ordinary sense. I am assuming that the readers of this publication are interested in the development of good writing, and in any phenomenon that displays it. Here is good native writing, an astonishing amount of it; sentiment, honesty, humor, descriptive charm. Don M. Wolfe, who taught these men for some months at American University, in Washington, D. C., writes in his introduction:

> What they taught me, and will teach all, I think, who read this book, is not alone the infinite reaches of the human spirit stretched out on the rack of war; they taught anew the dignity of human courage; they taught the measureless adaptation of men to a constructive existence, and they justified afresh the democratic expectations of American life.

More than that, however, the book teaches what many of us who are seeing manuscripts from veterans these days realize, that America has come of age in its writing, in a fashion that we had not quite expected. To those who are teaching the veterans now, let's issue a command. "Don't spoil them! Don't impose your own standards on them! Let them write this beautiful language of their own freshly and without curb!"

It is impossible to review this book in small. It is unfair to single out individual pieces. There are descriptions of evenings at home, of fields in Minnesota, and cookies at grandmother's. There are simply written chronicles of warfare, technically boring and ruefully bloody. There is friendship and hate, love, and vulgarity. There is the smell of the armed forces and the stench of battle. There is modesty and the naïve pride in heroism.

I wonder if Stanley Rinehart remembers riding on a train to Ossining in 1921 and passing breathlessly from hand to hand the pages of a worn manuscript (it had been read and rejected by many publishers) given to us by Carl Brandt. I am sure its author would agree that, whereas he was one of the few quick and faithful portrayers of World War I, for this war there are many. The world has moved, and today there are thousands of veterans writing — not thousands capable of writing that book, "Three Soldiers"—but thousands whose ability to put their thoughts and emotions on paper may be the

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greatest single factor in pulling the world out of chaos. We need no further evidence of John Dos Passos's agreement than the closing paragraph of his preface for this book:

> The accounts of combat all rise to one climax: the man is hit, there is the smashed body's golgotha before the medics come, then the gradual resurrection of what is left of the man, and his will to achievement in the ruined world . . . learning to walk on artificial legs. . . . These are the things we must not forget. For some reason a couple of pages under the caption "My Room in the Lilac Inn" gave me more than anything I've read a sense of what the struggle is like for a man who's trying to find a place in the world for his war-smashed body and spirit. Some of the sketches have patches of good writing in them, some of them are not well written at all, but it is hard to read them with dry eyes and without a feeling of bitter remorse that we have accomplished so little in our time towards building a nation fit for these sons and brothers and sisters of ours to give their lives for. These are things we must not forget. As you read sketch after sketch, and I for one couldn't put them down, the individual stories merge into one story. What you are reading is the life of which all our lives are a part, the story of man in our time.

It must be quite clear by now that I am urging you to go out and buy this book. *Buy this book.* Forgive me if this is a testament and not a review.

"It was this big!"

Our Gods of the Left

CRITICS AND CRUSADERS: A Century of American Protest. By Charles A. Madison. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 537 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ROGER N. BALDWIN

EVEN to an old hand in radicalism, these sketches of eighteen American reformers, set in the background of their times and movements, throw a fresh critical light on the native gods of the left. Mr. Madison, a busy New York book editor, invested his spare time for six years to draw on a wealth of sources for a labor of obvious sympathy. His object, he says, was to "depict and re-evaluate our social progress of the past century."

To do so he selected a few among the "non-conformists who have helped mightily to advance social and economic freedom." The choice of three representative men and women in each of six categories may seem arbitrary; but it creates a pattern that fits together by virtue of a common loyalty to some aspect of freedom and thereby evaluates considerable "social progress." The "crusaders" are evidently the anarchists, socialists, abolitionists, and militant liberals; the "critics" are the utopians and economic dissenters—with some mixing across the groups.

Absent from the studies of native radicals are labor leaders, Negroes, feminists, agrarians, and political reformers. The active doers tend to yield to the articulate propagandists. But the doers get honorable mention in the historical sketches introducing each of the six groups of biographies.

Mr. Madison's lives of the saints include two women, neither distinguished as feminists, only one man who graced public office, only one whose writings have endured to current reprints. Eight are New Englanders, of whom five are the inevitable Harvard graduates. Six of the eighteen lived into the present generation; the earliest was born in 1800. Five espoused imported European philosophies; all the rest rose out of the native soil of revolt.

Here they are: William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and John Brown for the abolitionists; H. D. Thoreau, Benjamin R. Tucker, and Emma Goldman for the anarchists; Eugene V. Debs, Daniel DeLeon, and John Reed for the socialists; Margaret Fuller, Albert Brisbane, and Edward Bellamy for the utopians; Henry George, Thorstein Veblen, and Brooks Adams for the dissident economists; and for the militant liberals, Governor J. P. Altgeld, Randolph Bourne, and Lincoln Steffens.

It would be easy to add or subtract from those choices, but all of them deserve present-day recognition, and each of them throws a long shadow in the light of American radical history. With a few exceptions they were sharply individualistic characters, full of color, visions, and gallant strivings. Mr. Madison rightly says of them all that "it is at least partly due to the agitation of these critics and crusaders that the American people are at present enjoying a combination of political freedom and well-being which is the envy of the world." However that may be qualified, it fairly places them in our democracy. Many of their goals remain still to be won. Much of their passion is still relevant. Only the abolitionists could write "finis."

Mr. Madison has presented highly controversial figures and movements with a rare impartiality, and with balanced judgments evidently checked with qualified authorities. His study of comparatively little-known sources weaves a unique story of the American left up to this generation. For sympathizers it is a tonic; for others at least an antidote to complacency.

Roger Baldwin is director of the American Civil Liberties Union and board chairman of the International League for the Rights of Man.

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F. D. R. in Fictionized Biography

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. By Alden Hatch. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 397 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by MARK S. WATSON

TO THE sober and critical appraisals of Franklin Roosevelt which have come to attention in recent months now is added a novelized study, by Alden Hatch, which manages to avoid altogether any evaluation of momentous White House actions upon which, for better or worse, turned the course of American economic and political history. This "informal biography," as the subtitle calls it, seeks rather to chronicle the personal side of a popular hero's life, with anecdotes of varying importance. Thus slightly more than half of the text deals with the relatively uneventful pre-Presidential years, by that measure outweighing the earth-shaking years of three administrations: the wrecking of the World Economic Conference in 1933 ("Franklin Makes an Error") is accorded little more space or attention than the episode of a boyhood bicycle trip through Germany, and the reader is hustled past the Court-packing essay at similar speed in order to get to the narration of a more highly personal episode. Mr. Hatch speaks of his facts as "absolutely accurate" and the essential conversations as "generally verbatim" but his good intentions have to combat the handicap of the book's novelized form and the intimately dramatic manner in which historic events are impressionistically recited.

In the early pages is chronicled a boyhood call by Franklin Roosevelt, with his father, upon Grover Cleveland at the White House, and a tradition that on that occasion Mr. Cleveland admonished the boy to pray that he might escape the Presidency; likewise a succession of small stories of youth's enthusiasms for bird-collecting and the like, of the high-kick championship at Groton, of the brash freshman interview with Harvard's Dr. Eliot. There is a fleeting reference to law school uncompleted, and to the unpromising days of practice.

Politics was the foreordained field of action, of course, and it was good fortune that brought victory to young Franklin Roosevelt at his very first candidacy for the Dutchess County seat in the New York Senate. Unlike the Oyster Bay Roosevelts, these Dutchess County members were Democrats (mavericks, in young T. R.'s estimate) and one can surmise that at such a season the wily Democratic machine was not averse to exploiting the Roosevelt name, albeit with misgivings about any Roosevelt's staying hitched to a machine—misgivings which were to be justified by Big Tim Sullivan's discovery that "the kid is worse than Teddy: his seat wasn't warm before he bolted." This prompt demonstration came as soon as the new Senate of 1911-12 assembled at Albany to name a new United States Senator under the Senate-naming system then in effect. The Democratic majority, Tammany-dominated, was set to elect Blue-Eyed Billy Sheehan, but twenty independent Democrats, including Roosevelt, balked at it, made up a balance of power, and held it until the Sheehan candidacy was dropped and a satisfactory substitute offered. Opportunty had knocked.

—Press Association, Inc.

The boy Franklin and his dog travel by donkey during one of "the relatively uneventful pre-Presidential years [1885]."

The narrative touches on growing activities in 1912, service in World War I as Assistant Secretary of the Navy (significantly, the post which Theodore Roosevelt had once occupied), the hopeless candidacy for Vice-President in 1920, and, soon afterward, the staggering blow of infantile paralysis. From a depth which would have held most men permanently this extraordinary man emerged to heights few men have dared aspire to. Some of Mr. Hatch's most useful pages are those which record that conquest of adversity, culminating in entry to the White House. On that same day, beyond one ocean, the Japanese were reaching the Great Wall of China and, beyond the other ocean, on the very next day, the new Nazi party was to attain victory in the last free election of the German Reich—surely a curious synchronizing of world events.

The years after 1933 are nearer us and their episodes more familiar. Against the grandeur of their events day-to-day anecdotes seem idle and frail, and an informal biographical treatment is grievously handicapped.

Conservatism Without Alarm

TOTAL WAR AND THE CONSTITUTION. By Edward S. Corwin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. xx + 182 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by T. V. SMITH

CONSERVATIVES — at least in America—are apt when articulate to be alarmist, a prerogative in "the eternal fitness of things" obviously belonging to the radical. To find a conservative who can speak of the "portentous" in a well-modulated voice is to discover what is as precious as it is rare. Greet, as a shining example of this virt e, Professor Edward S. Corwin, an meet, as exhibit M (for he has written many volumes), the present treatise.

The book was given as lectures primarily for lawyers (University of Michigan), and so will admit of simplification for our purpose. The theme is that our constitutional changes, made natural in war if not necessitated thereby, are never revoked in peace. So the tendency of change is all one way, is cumulative, is portentous, and is *away* from states' rights, away from Congressional autonomy, away from judicial protection of the individual against government—it is, in short, away from "rights" altogether. The tendency is *toward* executive (in)discretion, toward administrative uncircumspection, toward social rather than individual objectives, and toward security rather than liberty. The leeway allowed the Executive in World War I was utilized as constitutional reason for more of the same during the New Deal "emergencies." It was again enlarged, most probably for good, during World War II. Moreover, what "total war" made appear inevitable, "total peace" will most likely make seem desirable.

All this, if true, is clearly portentous; but it is kept from alarmism by the author's scholarship, his temperament of sweet reasonableness, his whimsy of good humor, perhaps in part here by being addressed to lawyers, and most of all, it may be, by his having constructive notions as to how to keep the bad from becoming the worst. But that is for the reviewer another story, and for the author another volume. Long may the flow continue from Edward Corwin's gifted pen.

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Romance and Realism Among the Russians

Two Reviews by Ernest J. Simmons

THE SHORT NOVELS OF TOLSTOY. Selected with an introduction by Philip Rahv. Translated by Aylmer Maude. New York: The Dial Press. 1946. 716 *pp.* $4.

THIS volume, like the previous "The Short Novels of Dostoievsky," is an admirable addition to the Dial Permanent Library, and it has a distinct advantage over the earlier book in that the translations of Aylmer Maude have much more sheer literary merit and flavor than Constance Garnett's versions of Dostoievsky.

Selection in the case of Dostoievsky's shorter pieces is a relatively easy task; with Tolstoy it is difficult because of the large number of his tales and their uniformly high literary quality. One cannot quarrel much with the choice of material in the present volume. The great things are there—"The Cossacks," "The Death of Ivan Ilych," and "Hadji Murad." And other pieces, "Polikushka," "The Devil," and "Master and Man," seem essential, though a more exacting taste, since space is an obvious limitation, might have given preference to "Father Sergei," "The Snowstorm," and "Strider" over the weaker "Two Hussars" and "Family Happiness." The collection, however, brings together the best of Tolstoy's shorter works, which can now be found in good English translations only in several volumes of the Oxford Edition.

Mr. Rahv's brief comments on the separate tales are informative. A knowledge of the biographical significance of "The Devil" and "Family Happiness" would have added something positive to his judgments in both instances. In the first the hero's tormented conscience over his carnal meetings with the strong peasant girl with full breasts takes on a deeper meaning in the light of Tolstoy's liaison with Aksinya Bazykina which inspired the tale. And the origin of "Family Happiness" does not precisely depend upon the progressive notion "of free love and the emancipation of women" at that time; in the work Tolstoy recreates his affair with Valerya Arseneva, whom he almost married. With some justice he called the story "a shameful abomination," and at one point he wanted to burn the manuscript.

Mr. Rahv's preface, however, is much more than a commentary on these tales; it is a profoundly perceptive critique of Tolstoy's art, though a little blunted by the author's lack of organization and the use of those

new hard words in the critic's arsenal, such as "euphoria" and "existential." To a considerable extent Mr. Rahv has wisely gone back to the Russians, who understand their Tolstoy, for his point of departure. He recognizes the supreme individualism and uncontaminated nature of Tolstoy as an artist, and errs only in claiming affiliations for him with Karamzin, Zhukovsky, Novikov, and Radishchev, who had little of the "skepticism" and none of the "robustness" that the author attributes to them.

The truth and simplicity of Tolstoy, as Mr. Rahv points out, place him beyond the "systematization of ambiguity" and the thoroughly artificial creative strategies and designs of modern novelists. There is no element of mystery, no sensationalism, no titillation of the reader's suppressed instincts in his novels; there is only the unaltered process of life itself.

Tolstoy did not fear death, as Mr. Rahv asserts. He accepted its inevitability in the end and simply tried to discover what there was in life worth living for that death did not destroy. Though a supreme rationalist, he never tried to explain by reason what reason is powerless to explain, for, as an artist, he was concerned only with making life live in his novels.

Ernest J. Simmons is board chairman of the American Russian Institute and executive officer of the Department of Slavic Languages at Columbia University, where he teaches Russian literature. He edited "U.S.S.R. — A Concise Handbook," just published, and is author of books on Dostoievsky, Pushkin, and Tolstoy.

ORPHAN PAUL. By Maxim Gorky. Translated by Lily Turner and Mark O. Strever. New York: Boni & Gaer. 1946. 270 *pp.* $2.75.

SOVIET RUSSIA this year is commemorating the tenth anniversary of Gorky's death with many celebrations and abundant publications in his honor. A small, undesigned contribution to that event here has been the appearance recently of a volume of Gorky's plays, a collection of his brilliant reminiscences, and the latest, a translation of a rediscovered short novel, "Orphan Paul," with a pendant piece, "How I Became a Writer," rendered into English for the first time.

Americans are not always aware of the fact that their popular conception of Russian "gutsy" realism was actually established by Gorky and not by the great giants, Dostoievsky, Turgeniev, and Tolstoy, who are often Victorian in their realistic effects. This realism, though not unmixed with Gorky's characteristic romantic flavor of description and incident, appears in "Orphan Paul" ("Luckless Pavel" in the Russian), a novel that he published in a Nizhni Novgorod newspaper at the very beginning of his career in 1894, and which remained unnoticed by his biographers and critics for many years.

Like so much of Gorky's early fiction, the story is full of recollections of his boyhood and youth—the harsh surroundings of his grandparents' home, thrashings, hard child labor, the queer people who employed him, and his love of birds and nature. In fact, there is much of young Gorky in Paul—his peculiar loneliness and introspection, his initial reactions to books, and his chaste idealization of women in the midst of debauchery. The foundling Paul is brought up by the woman-hating Arefi, a weird combination of policeman and religious fanatic. Man and boy live an abnormal life of silent communion with God and nature until Arefi's mind becomes unbalanced from too much preoccupation with saints and sinners. He is led away to an insane asylum, where he dies.

Thieving friends apprentice Paul to a drunken shoemaker. In this squalid environment he grows to manhood, a morose, uncommunicative, doltish, pock-marked youth with a morbid distrust of people, and especially women —those chief sinners of society whom Arefi had taught him to shun. Then the chance ministrations of the pros-

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titute Natasha during a severe illness suddenly bring Paul to life. The void of loneliness in his daily existence is filled by the exciting promise of a happy future. The story here acquires a Manon Lescaut flavor. The transformed Paul offers marriage, but this Russian Manon, sincerely loving him, cannot give up her carefree, singsong life of quondam callers for the dull and respectable security offered by her shoemaker. The narrative now takes on the darker, tragic flavor of a Dostoievsky. In a scene that may well have been inspired by that horrific one in "The Idiot" where Rogozhin murders the beautiful Nastasya, Paul kills the prostitute who refused to become his wife in order to save her from herself.

The romantic and melodramatic aspects of the book are considerably neutralized by the wonderful visual convincingness of background and characterization. Even thus early in his artistic career, Gorky reveals his unusual perceptiveness in bringing to life those off-center creatures of humanity that peopled his later tales. His persistent fault of wordiness is here: "The dirty old clock, with its yellow, fly-specked face, ticked off the seconds which dropped monotonously into the abyss of eternity." Chekhov once wrote him:

> You indulge in so many qualifications that the reader's mind finds it difficult to concentrate on them, and he soon grows tired. You understand it at once when I say: "A man sat on the grass." You understand it because it is clear and makes no demands on the attention. On the other hand, it is not easily understood, and it is hard for the brain to grasp, when I write: "A tall, narrow-chested, middle-sized man, with a red beard sat down on the green grass, already trampled by pedestrians, sat down silently, shyly, and looked around him timidly." That does not settle down in the brain at once, and good fiction should settle down at once. . . .

Despite such faults, "Orphan Paul" has the authentic ring of the best of Gorky's later works. The scene in which the gloomy, puritanical Paul, in a frenzy of despair at the thought of losing his Natasha, plunges into her attic room in the midst of her drunken companions, and tries unsuccessfully to simulate their gay abandon, is as fine a thing as Gorky ever wrote. Nor is there absent his extraordinary feeling and sympathy for all living humanity. Though the picture he paints is one of misery, unhappiness, and oppression, one distinguishes in this gray background the bright tints of hope that reflect his characteristic conviction that Russia is still the most wonderful country in the world where "even the fools are original."

Scholars and Ladies

A VICTORIAN ALBUM. Some Lady Novelists of the Period. By Lucy Poate Stebbins. New York: Columbia University. 1947. 226 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ERIC BENTLEY

FAKE scholars parade their erudition in numbered footnotes and and extended quotations; the elaborate mechanical apparatus exists to conceal an intellectual vacuum. The genuine scholar, on the other hand, does not transfer the contents of his filing-cabinet directly to his books. He absorbs the material and then writes out of his head. Hence a genuine scholar's work can be flippantly dismissed as "subjective." A fake scholar's work is as "objective" as the telephone directory, though seldom as useful.

Mrs. Lucy Poate Stebbins is a genuine scholar. Her little biographical essays on Victorian lady novelists are written "out of her head" which she has taken care to fill with relevant lore. One recalls with pleasure the history of the Trollope family which Mrs. Stebbins wrote not long ago in collaboration with her son. The Stebbinses found the golden mean between the falsification of so-called fictional biography and the elaborately factual meaninglessness of (fake) scholarly biography. Mrs. Stebbins has found it again in "A Victorian Album."

An essay apiece is assigned in the new book to four considerable people: Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, and Margaret Oliphant. Each essay amply proves that the art of scholarship is to conceal scholarship: the narrative is always simple, smooth, uncluttered, and quietly witty, and behind it is a more than ample erudition. It is a pity, though, that Mrs. Stebbins takes such a low view of literary criticism. (The little peroration of her book opens with the clause: "When criticism has said its arbitrary say . . ."). Had Mrs. Stebbins thought more highly of criticism, she would have trusted her own critical judgment a little more, and might have concluded that George Eliot, for example, is an even more impressive figure than "A Victorian Album" gives her credit for being. Literary biography cannot be independent of literary criticism for the good reason that writing is, to say the least, one of the chief parts of a writer's life. If (as I think) George Eliot's books are better than Mrs. Stebbins implies, that is only another way of saying that George Eliot was a greater genius and a greater person than the woman Mrs. Stebbins portrays.

I dwell on this example because Mrs. Stebbins's book would be better throughout for a more critical (I don't mean fault-finding) account of her authors' works. As social history, as a study of mores and a milieu, "A Victorian Album" is a good book. You learn much from it about the lives of Victorian women, specifically women who were writers and very much else besides, and you learn all this in the best possible way: not from statistics or documentary pseudo-demonstration but from the particular case, the concrete event, the imaginatively recreated reality. Mrs. Stebbins's talents and opinions being what they are, it may well be that her initial and concluding chapters, dealing with fifteen lesser ladies and with the social pattern of which they were part, form the most serviceable portion of the book.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 195

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 195 *will be found in the next issue.*

RBPJ DI OPHN? PY NHAJK

TETTWN; QZWU? P JFPYIDNYJ,

IBDYDYQ JFZETWN.

—IZWDJEUN—VPHNI

QFPDYQNF.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 194

Anger makes dull men witty, but it keeps them poor.
—FRANCIS BACON.
"Apothegms."

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LET THE EAGLE SCREAM

ANYONE who has the good fortune to be old enough today to have traveled in Europe before the long Victorian peace was smashed by the First World War finds the newspapers now dismal and ominous reading. The Gallic elegance and luxury of Paris, the imperial majesty and wealth of London, the palaces and parks of exquisite Vienna, the villages of Germany, tranquil and untouched for generations, the startling beauty of Greece, the drowsy English countryside, left nostalgic impressions on the malleable American youth of 1913, impressions that in these latter days have the power to shock and rend the mind with fear for the whole Western world and for humanity itself. This old, ordered tranquillity, this vision of ancient cultures contrasted strangely then with the sprawling disorder of American cities and backyards thirty-four years ago and concealed from unknowing eyes the seething unrest that was to erupt into war and the beginning of world revolution.

If your memories of those realms of civilization that lay between the Atlantic and the Balkans are still green, it is as savage a blow to look now upon the countenance of Europe as it would be to see, seamed and torn by some frightful accident, the once fair features of someone you have loved. But the blight that has crept over Europe, and Asia too, leaving millions of human beings cold, starving, hopeless, and disunited has not crossed either the Pacific or the Atlantic to our shores, though it has become almost a passion with countless Americans, whether intellectuals, or professional malcontents and grumblers, to condemn almost every aspect of our life and our activities. They say that our foreign policy is either too weak or too strong, that the conflict between labor and management will tear us apart, that there has been corruption in high places, that the conduct of our occupying armies abroad is so appalling that no one subject to them has any faith left in American institutions; some of them even say that we should drop our improved atom bombs on Russia's cities before it is too late to save ourselves. It is likely that this kind of dissatisfaction and disgust has followed every war and that it is not necessarily a symptom of deep-seated unrest. It can become a malignant disease, engendering feverish rancors and the sour bile of discontent in the body politic for a way of life that was a century and a half ago the wonder of the world.

It is time to reaffirm our faith in ourselves and our country without appearing to be chauvinistic or smugly complacent. We are going to need self-confidence, even national egotism, to stand unmoved and stalwart through the coming years, for this continent which we share with Mexico and Canada is a fortress and a bulwark against universal disaster, perhaps the only one that can save humanity from the revolutions and civil wars that may bring upon the world the dark ages once more. Glance for a moment at the news not a month old from the rest of the world: England herself, the very symbol of power and wealth, fighting for her economic life; Rumania, once fertile of grain, starving; India promised freedom but menaced by civil war; China at war with itself and in the midst of gigantic inflation.

Look then at the United States of America. We have survived the Second World War. Though our economy is burdened with an astronomical debt we are stronger than ever; it is even trite to say that we are incomparably the richest and the most powerful nation on earth. Our abundance is so great that we can afford to send millions of dollars abroad and millions of tons of food. Whether or not our generosity is necessary as a weapon of peace and an instrument of diplomacy it is true that, aside from vast public grants, American individuals continue their customary beneficences. Streams of packages of food and clothes and books are sent whenever there is an appeal for them, and the money that will help rebuild an English cathedral; even ten millions recently to be used for medical instruction in China. There is hardly a place on earth that is not touched by this health- and life-giving unremitting flood. To look askance at this phenomenon is as foolish as it is to refuse to be proud of it.

Our democratic institutions have emerged from the war unimpaired. A party strongly entrenched in power for nearly fourteen years has surrendered in a peaceful election to its opponents. In the long line of our Presidents, who have mostly come from humble beginnings, we now have an able man who once sold neckties and shirts over the counter; and there are few Americans who find this remarkable or worth a smile. The restrictions invented by a government that was for a time experimenting with a planned economy and those forced on us by the necessities of war are melting away. We do not have to live in a police state or under a dictatorship. Our economic system is unimpaired. Anyone anywhere in the United States can start a business; and if taxes and competition permit it, he can become as wealthy as he pleases. Our inventive capacity is still phenomenal; indeed it has been stimulated by the war. Whether in medicine, mechanics, physics, or chemistry our scientists lead the world; and there is no lack of millions for new laboratories, whether under government auspices, or private means. Our factories, occasionally closed by strikes, are nevertheless working at full capacity. We could supply the world with motor cars, trucks, washing machines, refrigerators, and all the other devices which minister to man's health and comfort and ease. American wells on this or other continents are pouring out niagaras of oil; we have enough timber in our forests to rebuild America and enough unmined coal to keep our industries going until we find power from splitting the atom or from the sun itself. The wages paid to labor were never higher. Our primary educational system is at present seriously undermanned, but the evil is now commonly known and diagnosed, and the cure will follow. Our universities and colleges are packed to the doors, but more than a billion will soon be spent in extending their facilities to any youth or girl who wants a higher education.

This list of our blessings, our gifts of ingenuity and energy, our power to work and produce could be continued almost indefinitely, for when the eagle starts screaming it is hard to silence so lusty a bird. Someone should set down in order and in glowing words that could be remembered a song dedicated to our strength and our virtues. It is time that we saw ourselves in perspective with the rest of the world and looked to the future with confidence and courage, so that we may have the compassion and the power to regenerate and come to the aid of all mankind. H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Group Libel

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Approximately 200 letters were received on the editorial proposal for "Group Libel" legislation. [SRL, February 1]. These included letters from public figures who were sent copies of the editorial. The general tide of comment ran against the proposal.*

SIR: Your editorial on "Group Libel" [*SRL*, February 1] opens up tremendously interesting avenues of thought and action. The same idea has been germinating in my mind with respect to a nation which goes to war. I believe that as an important factor in the elimination of war, every nation wishing to join in that objective should declare, in its constitution or as a part of its laws, the non-use of war. This has been done by MacArthur in the Japanese constitution. Then it would be understood that if anyone were training or preparing for war or taking a part in war, he would be a criminal in the eyes of the world and according to the laws of his own country. That puts an individual on notice.

That brings me to the point I want to make regarding the thought-provoking idea of yours. It would make each "joiner" more particular in what he joins, and would not make it so easy to form more groups such as those to which you refer in your article.

BERNARD M. BARUCH.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: You raise a most interesting question and you propose a very interesting answer. I would not be prepared to comment upon the latter without far more contemplation. But I certainly agree with your basic thesis. It is of course a tragic anomaly that "free speech" should be used by those who prostitute it; and that our anxiety to protect "free speech" should provide these prostitutes with immunity. But I think your Jeffersonian quotations (which could be multiplied ad infinitum) are a complete warning that we dare not give ourselves a license to restrict "free speech" in our defense of it no matter how nobly meditated our motives may be.

The day inevitably would come when our own precedent would be used against us. There either *is* or *isn't* "free speech." The fact remains that there should be means for holding those who abuse "free speech" to a stricter accountability for their sins. I confess I do not know the answer. You may be interested in knowing that I posed one phase of this question to a recent Michigan gathering.

Your idea of "group libel" is well worthy of exploration. But like every other departure from the basic rule, it must be carefully weighed lest the harm outbalance the good.

ARTHUR H. VANDENBERG.

United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"What's the name of that beanpole debating Stephen Douglas?"

SIR: I am quite certain that any law creating a "group libel" would be undesirable. As a civil wrong for which damages would be the remedy, it would be practically a dead letter; there would be few or no cases in which the plaintiff could prove that he had been actually damaged. A jury might indeed give what in other actions for defamation are called "punitive" damages; but these are not damages at all but penalties, and are really a disguised way of punishing the wrongdoer to the profit of the person alleged to be the victim. The law is indeed so settled, but for myself I should be glad to see punitive damages abolished everywhere; and certainly they should not be extended. If anything of the kind you suggest is to be done, it ought to be by way of criminal libel; and that too I should be against.

It is quite true that the kind of defamation you have in mind has that tendency to promote disorder which has been the conventional justification for all criminal libel; yet, if one thinks through the working of such prosecutions in practice, I should suppose that their effect would be rather to exacerbate than to assuage the feelings which lie behind the defamation of groups. The verdict of a jury—even assuming that it was possible to have a really impartial trial, which it would not be—would not satisfy those who sided with the losers, and would only serve further to arouse the fanaticism of those who sided with the winners; and the trials themselves would be occasions for violent propaganda on both sides that would fan the flames. The passions which lie at the root of such utterances do not have their basis in evidence, and will not yield to it; and any issues capable of being presented in a court which do depend on evidence would have to go back far into history and be quite beyond the grasp of a jury of men and women unskilled in such inquiries.

There is no remedy for the evil, but the slow advance of the spirit of tolerance; and I believe that the suppression of intolerance always tends to make it more bitter. This is a result most unsatisfactory to ardent natures, and it may be wrong; I can only tell you what I believe.

Judge, LEARNED HAND.

United States Court of Appeals,
New York, N. Y.

SIR: Your suggestion for a group libel law interests me very much, although I can see some tremendous difficulties in drafting the necessary legislation and I am inclined to believe it is a subject which is largely reserved for the Federal Government.

JOSEPH H. BALL.

United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: Group libel is, as you clearly indicate, a very difficult problem but I believe that it is a good thing to bring it out into the open.

Some time ago I wrote an article entitled "From Seditious Libel to Freedom of Press." In that article I referred to the subject of group libel and said as follows:

> Cases have held that the state may punish through "disorderly conduct" statutes, which do not provide for trial by jury, for offensive speech of such a character as to constitute, particularly in connec-

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tion with the conduct of the offender, a breach of the peace, or serious danger thereof.

The balancing of our desire for free speech and trial by jury against our wish to maintain order and eradicate racial and religious intolerance is a most delicate task. A difficult problem is presented by the type of agitation, in public places, which is calculated to incite religious or racial hatred. In such cases there is generally more than the spoken or written word which is objectionable. There is the conduct of the speaker, the place he has chosen for his speech, and his direct incitement to lawlessness.

However, caution must be used even where there appears to be an abuse of the right of free speech which tends to a breach of the peace and involves an utter disregard of a Constitutional mandate as sacred as that of free speech itself. In the City of New York, for example, consideration might be given to the question as to whether it would be better policy not to have the case disposed of by a single judge, but rather to resort to the Court of Special Sessions presided over by three justices.

It has been urged that an offensive attack upon a race or a religion is as much outside the pale of freedom of speech as is any public obscenity. Perhaps the disorderly conduct statutes should be amended to prohibit, specifically, offensive attacks upon any race or religion, and consideration might well be given to the advisability of broadening the definition of criminal libel to cover attacks upon a race or a religion. It may be difficult to draw such a statute that will stand the test of constitutionality. But as Mr. Justice Frankfurter recently said: "Free speech is not so absolute or irrational a conception as to imply paralysis of the means for effective protection of all the freedoms secured by the Bill of Rights."

BERNARD L. SHIENTAG.

Justice, Supreme Court of the
State of New York,
New York, N. Y.

SIR: Group libel may be successful in some cases but it will not be successful in all. I think the best of all stories to illustrate the point is the one given me as a youngster by my own Sunday school teacher who was trying to show us that we should not kill birds. Birds were man's friends, but my teacher always ended his lesson by calling our attention to the fact that when it came to sparrows it was different. He taught us plainly that it was all right to kill the "damn" sparrows. Never was a man quite so wrong as he, but all during my youthful generation my teacher's ideas prevailed; we went on killing the "damn" sparrows.

I am afraid that there will always be groups and groups. Those that are not able to defend themselves will not be helped by group libel. How can they? I think no matter how long you dwell on the subject of liberty and then attempt to discover some rights under liberty's banner and then attempt to protect those rights, that they will all fall by the wayside unless, in some way or another, the great lesson that there is no right even in a government of law unless connected with right are responsibility and duty. That is the lesson that must some way or another be taught.

Jefferson felt that liberty was so good for man that man, himself, would discover that lesson. Liberty without proper education always has and always will fail. A trained citizenry, therefore, is the key to liberty's guarantee. If you analyze those elements in our society whose actions are backed by hate, you will discover that they have always opposed universal free schools where equal educational opportunities for all are guaranteed. In other words it is our fear of idealism and idealistic democracy that makes it impossible for us to gain real liberty.

Forgive me for writing so much. I am wondering how a group like the one to which I belong could ever remedy wrongs inflicted upon our fathers and grandfathers in any other way than through proper teaching of the truth. I believe before you will get real liberty you have got to not only know how to love your neighbor but to appreciate him. That is an awful task.

If our major press would attempt to stress the idea of its duty and responsibility to the public in return for the freedom which it is guaranteed, I am pretty sure that we would have freedom of speech in no time. But if I can judge from what I read every day, the press is only interested in protecting its rights. Never does it sense an obligation to be right. You see, that is probably where we have failed. Jefferson thought, of course, that the press, since it was guaranteed freedom, would be an educational medium but no education is worth while unless the whole truth is taught.

ELBERT D. THOMAS.

United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: The problem you are trying to solve is an important and difficult one. Your suggested solution, although somewhat original, is basically the same as the solutions offered for all our problems—more laws and additional legal remedies.

Almost every "progressive" and "liberal" doctrine is based upon further governmental restrictions of liberty because of social and economic conditions which we ourselves have created by our own man-made system of civilization. Which, as Lewis Carroll might say, makes everything "complexer and complexer." And the further mixed up we got the louder are the cheers for the passage of legislation which gets us further mixed.

Within the last year and a half I have startled audiences (sometimes composed largely of members of what we call "minority groups") by telling them there are no such things as rights of minorities. I ask them to examine the Constitution of the United States and tell me if anywhere in that document they find mention of any such things.

What they *will* find is just what was intended to be there—*rights* of individuals. I plead with them to stop talking in terms of minorities and minority groups; I ask them to talk and think in terms of individual American citizens. If any actual right is violated it is the right of an American citizen —not the right of "a member of a minority," even though it may have been violated by someone who may do so just because the one whose right has been violated belongs to a minority group; I have told them that they have confused the *reason* for the violation with the right violated, and that by their very reference to themselves as minority or special groups or classes, by this very segregation of themselves, they are only making more and more acute and bitter the consciousness of something which the Constitution did its very best to eliminate. Instead of quenching the fire, they are adding fuel.

And now you suggest that we go further and recognize by legislation not only the legitimate existence of classes, groups, and sets but afford them some kind of legalistic remedy *eo nomine*. And by that one further step we will add to class consciousness, whether it be because of birth, religion, or economic status or whatnot. And out of the legal fights that will ensue still further class antagonisms and hatreds will grow.

What about us Congressmen? Is there a group or a minority in the United States that has been more libeled and maligned than Congress, as such? What do you propose we do about that?

Before I came to Congress I did quite a little writing. During the days of the New Deal I wrote some articles and one book, the book about four or five years ago. No magazine editor wanted them. I only offered the book to one or two publishers, but they were so patently frightened by both the title and the content it was almost funny. The title was "The Hypocrisy of Democracy." The content was in essence a defense of the Constitution. But "liberalism" was popular, "democracy" was our idol. And now we are wondering what happened to us.

You are engaged in the very profession which can do the most good in solving this problem—the education of the American public to true fundamentals. Yet you propose legislation of a novel and, to my mind at least, dangerous type. May I refer you to Conwell's "Acres of Diamonds"?

You are the best protectors of liberty. I know that a magazine is run to make money and not as a crusade. But unless editors begin to risk something for liberty just as men have suffered and died for it, do not think that it will be saved by fascinating formulas such as your editorial suggests.

FRANK A. MATHEWS, JR.

House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

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He Made a Footnote to History

THE ABBE EDGEWORTH. By M. V. Woodgate. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1946. 262 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PADRAIC COLUM

WHO was the Abbé Edgeworth? Most people will remember another Edgeworth, Maria, when they hear the name, and they will not be astray in connecting the novelist and writer of moral tales with the abbé, for Henry Essex Edgeworth and Maria were second cousins. Maria, socially, owed a great deal to her cousin when she was on the Continent, but she does not mention him in her letters: the reason was that the abbé belonged to the Catholic branch of the family, had a brother living on a small estate in Ireland, and, as at the time no Catholic could have a title to property, the mention of an abbé would have been dangerous.

But Henry Essex Edgeworth has his own place in history, or at least in a footnote to history. Some readers will have heard of the Irish priest who administered the last sacraments to Louis XVI, and standing beside the guillotine said, "Son of Saint Louis arise!" The apostrophe was invented for him: the Abbé Edgeworth was the least theatrical of men.

The Abbé Edgeworth is a man we wonder at and admire, not for any achievement of his own—the part he took in historical happenings was forced upon him—but for his integrity and his willingness to put himself at the service of others. He was that rare person—a genuine priest. If one thinks of his story as that of a man called by chance—but he felt it was by Providence—to a dangerous and tedious service and giving himself disinterestedly, one will be moved by it.

Educated in the Irish College of Toulouse, Edgeworth was living usefully and happily in Paris with a sister as the Revolution developed. His parishioners were people of the slums and he served them faithfully. After an illness he was put in charge of the English and Irish in Paris—there were more Irish in Paris then than at any time since, soldiers of the old Irish Brigade, their families, and students. He was sent for by Madame Elizabeth who, like her brother, the king, and his queen and the young princess, were prisoners at the time. It was a call to danger, but the abbé went in and out of the Tuileries unharmed. Madame Elizabeth desired him to take a letter to her brother who was then in Scotland, a letter which he was not to write down but to commit to memory. And then, the king having been sentenced to execution, he was asked to give him the last consolations of his religion.

The scenes with Louis XVI, that simple and pious family man who should have been an artisan, were told by the abbé in his letters in a literal way that is very moving. After the execution he went unharmed and unnoticed through the crowd like a man taken care of by Providence.

The part of his life that made the most demand on his spirit began after that memorable happening. He escaped from France at the height of the Revolution and reached England, where Pitt offered him a pension which he declined. He then went to Scotland and delivered the message which had been entrusted to him. And now it was possible for him to visit the family that he had not been with since childhood.

But it was not to be so swiftly dispatched; then and there Edgeworth was given one of those errands that consume the rest of a man's day. "He was never to return to England. He would never see Ireland again or even France. Germany, Russia, Poland, they were to be in turn his home." He went to a king in exile, to a person whom nobody wanted.

The court was exiled from their place of exile. The emperor of Russia offered them a refuge in the Baltic provinces. "The journey was most terrible and the abbé was never to forget it. It took thirty-one days and the cold was intense on all of them. . . . The roads, when they were not snow-bound, were made almost impassable by mud." When they reached this new refuge Edgeworth was made chaplain and almoner to the court. "His fate was sealed now, and bound forever with that of his royal master, and no life could have been more sterile and more dreary than the one now offered him . . . here there was no one with whom he could have any spiritual contact, and he had, besides, little outlet for his gifts, which were rare. The success of his missions to the Emperor Paul I must have comforted him a little. "For the Czar was so deeply impressed by him that he knelt before him and implored his blessing." He gave the abbé something substantial to remember him by—his portrait set in diamonds, and a yearly pension of five hundred rubles. But the pension must have got lost in the political and military shuffle, for when his little property in Ireland disappeared, he was left destitute.

In the meantime the court had been ordered out of Russia. Their next refuge was Warsaw. Napoleon offered the king an indemnity on condition that he make a formal abdication; he refused, the abbé being consulted by him. The poverty of the royal household increased, and this added a burden to his almoner's life.

The situation became worse and worse for Louis XVIII and his adherents. Napoleon got himself proclaimed Emperor and the Pope recognized the usurper. This must have seemed catastrophic to Edgeworth. And with it, while the court was back in the gloom of Lithuania, came a private disaster. Through the mismanagement of an agent his property in Ireland was lost to him. He writes of this as a "doom" and "fatal." The one resource that was constant in all the shifts of exile, the resource that made him independent among the dependents on the royal bounty, was taken away from him. And he had an old aunt in Paris and a servant who had come with the family from Ireland to support.

We are glad that we have the record of the triumph of the abbé's goodness over his bitterness. "For some minutes I had not the courage to open it," the delinquent agent wrote of the letter he received from him. "The tender, affectionate, and forgiving language . . . has wrung my very soul."

Abbé Edgeworth died from jail-fever caught from attending French prisoners of war. The king wrote his epitaph in Latin for the stone that stands above his grave in Lithuania. "The Abbé Edgeworth" is the story of a strange pilgrimage, and it is told very simply and directly by Miss Woodgate, who is an authority on the personages of the late Bourbon entourage. It is a story well worth reading for it puts us in contact with a rare human being, a man whose goodness was integral.

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Seeing Things

OLD MAN WITH A WALKING-STICK

WESTMINSTER ABBEY is one church that is always overcrowded. No service may be in progress; no sightseers wandering down its aisles. Still, night and day, winter and summer, it is jammed to the point of suffocation—with statues. No doubt these are more accustomed to being damned than thanked. Full length or busts, standing or reclining, toga-ed or in knee breeches, the members of this marble community are apt to be as troublesome as they are unesthetic. They hide the glories of the Abbey. They dwarf its scale, obscure its vistas, congest its traffic.

Even so, one statue in that immobile group merits our thanks. This is the "whole-length of the celebrated Mr. Garrick" which caught the eye of Charles Lamb one day when he was taking a turn in the Abbey. Lamb did not remember having seen it before. What attracted his attention at once was its "affected attitude." He was not a little scandalized at the "theatrical airs and graces" it introduced into "a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities."

Worse than this statue of Garrick, to Lamb's way of thinking, were the verses inscribed beneath it. They dared to couple the name of Davy, the actor, with that of William, the poet, as if the men were "twin-stars." Stagestruck though he was, this was more than Lamb could bear. He resented these jingles. He condemned them as a "farrago of false thoughts and nonsense." Indeed, they so irked him that he was provoked into writing one of the most remarkable essays in the language, his famous "On the Tragedies of Shakspeare, Considered with Reference to Their Fitness for Stage Representation."

Recently, almost every dramatic critic in Manhattan has recalled that essay. With reason, too. Because Donald Wolfit and a group of English actors have appeared in New York in "King Lear."* This much, at least, must be said about their production. They acted, costumed, set, lighted, directed, and played the tragedy as if they were Charles Lamb's legatees, determined to prove that Elia was right when he insisted, "'Lear' is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage."

Lamb knew he might be considered guilty of indulging his old fondness for paradoxes when, going far afield of "King Lear," he contended "the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist whatever."

Like many another debater, he was tempted into weakening his point by overstating it. But he had a point, deliberately perverse as it was; a point as old as the battle between drama as literature and drama as theatre. The "distinguished excellence" of Shakespeare's plays was Lamb's justification; this and the fact that "there is so much in them which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye and tone and gesture have nothing to do."

Doubtless Elia could have taken the other side of the argument with equal brilliance. He loved the theatre as much as he doted on a paradox. What is more, he could write about it like a host of angels. Anyone knows this who has read him at all. No one can forget it who has been warmed by the perfection of his tributes to *Liston and Munden*; his evocation of the "Old Actors"; above all, by his matchless appreciations of Mrs. Jordan's Viola and Bensley's Iago and Malvolio. They remain among the unfaded and unfading glories of theatrical criticism.

When, however, as an ardent Bardolator, Lamb wrote his essay on Shakespeare's tragedies, he had for the moment turned against the footlights as only an ink-stained man can who fancies literature's good name has been besmirched. Garrick's statue in the Abbey had lighted the fuse for him. It had started him reflecting on the absurdity of having each popular Shakespearean performer greeted by the town as if he possessed a "mind congenial with the poet's," merely because he could recite Shakespeare's lines and gesture and grimace while so doing.

LAMB'S defense was of the subtler, interior values; those values recognized by the individual reader which are apt to be ignored by the playgoer, if for no other reason than that they are not within the compass of theatrical representation. His concern was with the merits of Shakespeare which are *beyond* the stage. To defend his case, he chose to shut his eyes on those virtues which are transcendentally dramatic and cannot be realized in the study.

Almost as if by design, Elia failed to make a point made by A. C. Brad-

"Outside a hospital ward, seldom have so many pajamas and nightgowns been assembled as Donald Wolfit has brought together in the name of Ancient Britain."

* *KING LEAR, by William Shakespeare. Settings and costumes by Ernest Stern. Presented by Hall Shelton by arrangement with Advance Players Association, Ltd. With a cast including Donald Wolfit, Eric Maxon, Kempster Barnes, Frederick Horrey, Alexander Gauge, Violet Farebrother, Ann Chalkley, and Rosalind Iden. At the New Century Theatre.*

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ley, another anti-"Lear" man, and one of the most penetrating and unanswerable of the lot so far as the text's adaptability to the stage is concerned. Scenes in the other great tragedies, according to Bradley, "may lose upon the stage, but they do not lose their *essence*, and they gain as well as lose. . . . The Storm-scenes in 'King Lear' gain nothing and their very *essence* is destroyed."

Wide open to challenge as is Lamb's general indictment, and violently as we may dispute him on the subject of "Richard III," "Macbeth," "Hamlet," and "Othello," it is difficult not to agree with him about "King Lear." The best defense of "Lear" as a produceable play is Granville-Barker's fine preface. The only flaw in this is that he supplies everything except the actors. But the best argument against "Lear" on the stage is not Lamb's essay, or Bradley's lecture, or Margaret Webster's chapter. It is "Lear" itself; "Lear" especially when seen in such a production as Mr. Wolfit's.

I am told by my British colleagues that Mr. Wolfit has been described as "the poor man's Gielgud." This is hard on Gielgud, and harder on the poor man. That Mr. Wolfit loves Shakespeare, and loves him with an earnest, dedicated, and self-sacrificing passion, no one can deny. But to say an actor loves Shakespeare means as little as to say that Icarus loved flying. It is dangerous to approach him as a dramatist, and fatal to soar towards Lear as a character, unless one's wings are attached with stronger stuff than wax.

There are those, hell-bent in their search for "culture," who believe it is better to see Shakespeare poorly acted than not to have him acted at all. I cannot follow their reasoning, and never have been able to do so. Every bad production of a Shakespearean play seems to me a contribution to the mite-box of the Philistines. Shakespeare not only challenges the theatre's best; he deserves it. I cannot understand what is gained by having his excitements made dull, his plays made absurd, his grandeur dwarfed, and his beauties murdered. He lives in the theatre only by being made alive there each time he is revived. To sit up with the corpse may be the obligation of a wake, but it is not the point of a production.

"Oh God! put back Thy universe and give me yesterday! Too late! Too late!," the hard-pressed hero of Henry Arthur Jones's "The Silver King" used to cry. This is precisely what Mr. Wolfit has tried to do as a producer in his "Lear." He has sought to repeal time and deny progress.

He has invited a modern audience, accustomed to Shakespearean pro-

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ductions as enlightened as Miss Cornell's, Mr. Evans's, Miss Webster's, the Mercury "Julius Caesar," the Old Vic's, and the screen's "Henry V," to move back through the years beyond Fritz Lieber's and Robert B. Mantell's offerings right into the epoch of the Crummles family. Furthermore, he has dared to do this with "King Lear," a tragedy so monumental in its grandeur that it would resist complete realization on the stage even if Granville-Barker were alive to direct Laurence Olivier as the King in a company including the world's best actors.

Outside a hospital ward, seldom have so many pajamas and nightgowns been assembled as, with a belt looped here and a shawl draped there, Mr. Wolfit has brought together in the name of Ancient Britain. What is in most of these nightgowns and pajamas is no less distressing. It is a band of players, all lungs and lips, gutturals and reverberations, who envelop the tragedy in a fog of incomprehensibility.

Mr. Wolfit is an exception. Visually, he has his impressive moments. He has a tireless voice. Its range is extensive. He reads several scenes extremely well. Here and there he makes it plain that, with proper direction and some help from the switchboard, his scene designer, and his fellow-actors, he could be an acceptable Lear (as Lears go) in a pedestrian way.

To see him, however, is not to see Shakespeare's "Lear" acted. It is to have Lamb's paradox confirmed. It is "to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night. . . . The contemptible machinery, by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements than any actor can be to represent Lear; they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michael Angelo's terrible figures. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual; the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano—they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches. . . . On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage; while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear—we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms."

This much, at least, can be said for Mr. Wolfit's production. It sends us back to re-read "Lear," not only out of necessity but with a new pleasure.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

Slim Volumes

SOLITAIRE. By Alison Kimball. Wilmington, Del.: The Wilmington Poetry Society. 1946. 16 pp. $1.75.

TOKEN OF REMEMBRANCE. By Susan Sharp Adams. The same.

Reviewed by I. L. SALOMON

THIS very young poet has more than considerable talent. All of her poems in "Solitaire" were written between her sixteenth and nineteenth years, and most of them have the impulse of poetic discrimination. She has a good eye, a good ear, and a way with words that is refreshing. What she lacks in austere discipline we can attribute to her youth, but she counterbalances this by precise observation. She has warmth and heart and wit, and if her verse forms are in traditional patterns, she gives them the distinction of her personality. "Planned Retreat" would grace the work of a maturer poet:

Before they burn another town,
before more bombers come,
I shall creep off and settle down
where animals are dumb.

I shall forget familiar names
and learn the forest words;
while men I know go down in flames
I will mourn fallen birds.

But if some bit of life still stands
after the smoke has died,
I shall crawl back on knees and hands
and beg to come inside.

There are only sixteen poems in "Solitaire," but a dozen of them are good.

Susan Sharp Adams is an older poet. She is at ease in the lyric, the sonnet, and the narrative. "The Surgeon," "Grist," and "Ebb-Tide" stand well above her other work, some of which is passable, and some downright intolerable. "Young Tragedy" and "The Traffic Cop" are postcripts to verse rather than poetry.

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Misty Childhood

THE WHITE ROCK. By Denys Val Baker. New York: D. Appleton-Century. 1947. 216 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HAROLD TAGER, JR.

NOVELS, especially first novels, about childhood and adolescence generally are considered hazardous. Even with considerable self-focus and self-search, the artistic recall is likely to be a rather wavering underwater view of the childhood reality, with the possibilities for accuracy lying somewhere between a slight blurring and complete distortion.

In one sense, at least, it is difficult to criticize Mr. Baker on this basis. If eleven-year-old Margiad never emerges into the bright daylight, it is because she is never really intended to do so. Mad of brain, distorted of vision, she moves closer and closer to the drowning world of pure hallucination. With phantasy become reality, reality become motion, she swims out to the "White Rock" far off the Welsh coast, where her mother supposedly lies hiding in fugitive fear of her father.

So almost does Powys, but Powys, Mr. Baker indicates, is not mad. That Powys, seven years old, should pretend to believe as eleven-year-old Margiad believed, in the existence of the "White Rock" is excellent psychology in terms of a sister fixation. That pretension should have become belief, however, for Powys as well as for Margiad, is, I think, a severe underestimation of a child's relation to reality.

Mr. Baker has sensed this himself. For Powys he has fixed several points of reality, the familiar, polar magnetic points of any child, a father, an uncle, and an aunt. Yet aware as the father, Aunty Sian, and Uncle Emrys are of the consuming dangers which attend both Powys and Margiad, we wait in vain for Powys's father to make the simple, explicit explanation: "Your mother is insane; your mother is in a sanitarium; your sister is going insane; there is no White Rock; come, I will show you in my boat." And why, indeed, is Margiad never committed to a sanitarium as well?

Like most romantics, Mr. Baker has been interested in sustaining a single, overwhelming, atmospheric effect. He does—with a style that is frequently sensitive, but too often overcharged, too often blurred. Let me add that the mist he throws up is not unpleasant; once having ceased to peer for the clear signs and the right road, you can wander at will and enjoy the Welsh landscape.

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Fresh Eggs and Manly Chores

THE COUNTRY YEAR. By Mark Van Doren. New York: William Sloane Associates. 1946. 131 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JAMES R. CALDWELL

THIS book of well-turned and canonical nature poems leaves the mind beset with a number of agreeable rustic scenes, a number of delicate cadences, and some rather troublesome questions. It is a kind of shepherd's calendar, though the shepherd drives a car and there are no sheep, and takes us round the seasons in good bucolic order. Yet Mr. Van Doren explains that the seasons as such are not his subject. "Perhaps not even the country is, for I suspect that all poems, mine or others . . . are concerned with a subject the name of which will never be found." This rather oracular and dark saying will do well enough at the level of ultimates and magnitude. More immediately, however, these poems are about the seasons, about the country, and more specifically about a sensitive and thoughtful man returned to the country.

That numbers of comfortable urban folk are moved in this comfortable urban age to go and live more or less primitively on Connecticut or Illinois farmsteads is a fact of genuine significance. Nostalgia for fresh eggs and *tempores acti* is probably the impulse behind most of this movement. However, both of these objects are trivial, and only one recoverable. Beside these, deeper urges seem occasionally active, the need, for example, to reconsider the relationship of man to his society, or to his earthly matrix. These latter seem to me excellent reasons for going on the land, and the best possible reasons for writing poetry about it.

They were Wordsworth's reasons, and in the opinion of many (though I think not of Mr. Van Doren) they give depth and passion to his nature poetry. The chain of natural piety which bound his days each to each was, at any rate, no mere poetic ornament. The author of "The Country Year" is an inheritor, though not especially imitative, of the Wordsworthian tradition via, of course, Robert Frost. But he differs essentially from his ancestor. The difference appears emphatically when we compare "Rain Crow" of this volume with "Yarrow Unvisited." They are comparable in the respect that they are both about a poet's conscious choice not to look at natural objects of great beauty. When Wordsworth elects not to revisit Yarrow, he does so for a specific reason, which concerns the working of the imagination on stored images. When the poet "Rain Crow" will not lift his eyes to see the bird he has at length overtaken in the song-flooded wood, he is inhibited, as far as one can tell, merely by sentiment:

> soon the place
> Flowed full of the sad music I had sought.
> I waited with my eyes upon the ground.
> I would not lift them up to see a bird.

Wordsworth knew where he stood on Rydal Mount; Mr. Van Doren among the rocks and rills is much less certain, or more reticent.

Meanwhile fresh eggs (let them stand for the soily concretions of farm life) and times past engage him to fine lyric consequences. He reports the earned pride of the wood-splitter, the names of apples, the manly ritual of chores with a quiet and contagious relish. Likewise, the melancholy charm of bygones sings softly in poems about fallen sheds, empty barns, abandoned houses. He is a studious and skilful evocator of the wistful. Also, as one would expect, there is much description, and it is close and telling. The cat's eventful and lithe journey across the barn yard, the mare sighing as she nuzzles the winter-cold pail of water; hundreds (literally I suppose) of such fleeting items are examined with a delicate and fresh scrutiny. Often these records are enriched with a con-

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
EXPERIMENT IN CRIME *John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50)	British mfr. abducted and slain by parties unknown and untraceable. Supt. Waghorn of Scotland Yard is baffled—but Dr. Priestley elucidates.	Possible infraction of Rules of Game and fairly questionable method of solution may annoy, but background and "atmosphere" are pleasing.	Middle-of-Rhode
HE DARED NOT LOOK BEHIND *Cledwyn Hughes* (Wyn: $2.)	British dentist, jealous of wife's gleaming artificial leg, adroitly eliminates spouse—but *not* limb, which gets him in the end.	Murder method clever; writing good; but idea was better and less ludicrously handled in "Beast with Five Fingers" and "Monkey's Paw."	Tolerable
THE CLEAN-UP *Joe Barry* (Arcadia House: $2.)	Mysterious employer pays private 'tec Henry ten grand to clean up vice-ridden Midwestern town — which means copious blood-letting.	Implausible but swiftly moving and cadaver-sprinkled tale with dauntless hero, helpful gal, and exceptionally well concealed *diabolus ex machina.*	Readable roughie
MURDERER IN THE HOUSE *Kate Clugston* (Wyn: $2.50)	Pathological killer moves in on Mass. family and practically wrecks it before he is finally eliminated.	Convincing picture of warped mind turned loose in household of normal and terrified people. Nervous writing adds to impact of yarn.	Grim
THE WHISPERING DEATH *Roy Vickers* (Jefferson House: $2.)	Husky-voiced English criminal, who snares victims by radio, catches tartar in resourceful Parliamentary secretary who leads police to solution.	Identity of wicked "Chief" soon evident, but antics of his gang and double-crossing new "recruit" keep tale rolling.	Gaudy shocker
WITH INTENT TO DECEIVE *Manning Coles* (Crime Club: $2.)	Blameless Britisher meets spit - and - image from Argentine—who gets murdered. Subsequent activities involve Tommy Hambledon and long-suffering Insp. Bagshott.	Adventures of middle-aged masquerader in eliminating South American thugs and holding Nazi treasure are packed with violence, excitement, and humor.	Expert thriller

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sciousness of subtle and symbolic empathies, linking suggestively observer to object:

> . . . there is something that can race
> With any wing, and no one see.
> (Bird Watcher)
> A little water will put out the fire
> But wait .....
> .....a wild piece
> Of me and you we presently must
> drown. (Camp Fire)

And beyond these there are hinted certain local presences that lurk behind the wood and the spring wind, in a region somewhere between animism and whimsy:

> Nothing could touch the little soul
> Of the grain. It ran to cover;
> And nobody knew in what warm
> hole
> It slept till winter was over.

All of this is apprehended by a finely poised sensibility, and presented in verses of faultless, even texture. All, that is, save a few passages of "A Winter Diary" which sound at times like second-best Keats.

"The Country Year" is a finely written book, full of accessible beauty, but it is a book of mild effect. "Living in the country," says Mr. Van Doren in his preface, "like living in New York, is living in a myth." This seems a muffled statement, and the impact of this volume is similarly muffled. One would not wish to reproach a poet for failing a task he has not undertaken. The healthy ardors, the nostalgia, the vivid moments of life with nature recorded with mastery are doubtless things to thank God on. Yet living in the country unlike living in New York implies an act of simplification. Mr. Van Doren does not reveal the structure of that act. He attends but does not confront nature. I believe we are entitled to some confrontation by poets who take us back to the soil.

My final comment has nothing to do with poetry. It is to ask why the prospective buyer of this book is nowhere told that many if not most of these poems have already appeared in one or more books, and are here merely reproduced. This is indeed a curious lapse.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 676)

OSBERT SITWELL:
THE SCARLET TREE

These were still the days . . . when every unmarried woman must "have a hobby." . . . It was typical of my cousins that Miss Flora "went in" for "artistic leather-work," embossing Renaissance tulips in fretted shallow relief upon pigskin wallets.

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Ireland in Many Moods

AT SALLYGAP AND OTHER STORIES. By Mary Lavin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 348 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by
CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

HAVING the dream is what counts. What if the yearning is never realized, if the struggle for understanding is never finished? It is given to few of us to reach the green of the far-off hills and to even fewer, on arrival, to recognize those hills.

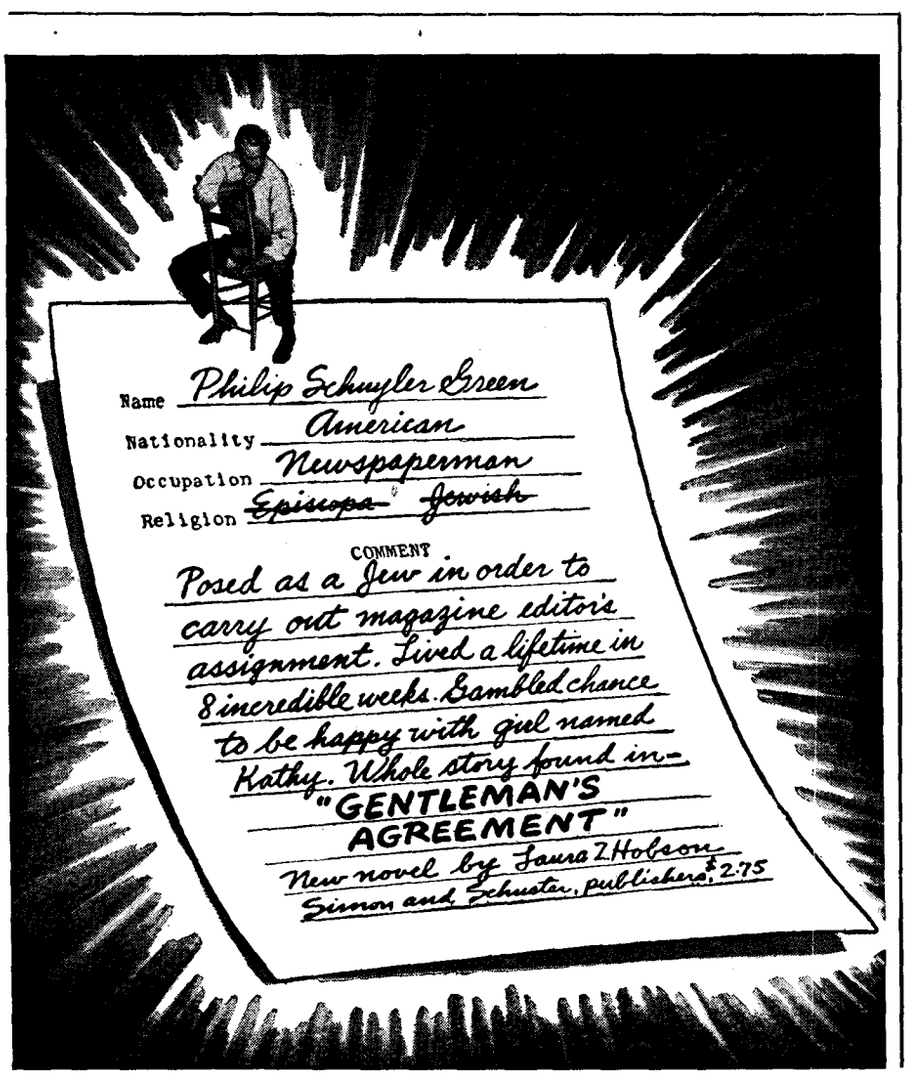
In the twelve stories Miss Lavin tells there is despair but no dulness. Her people fight loneliness, long for oneness and joy, and live valiant lives. They are unmistakably Irish and therefore they are charming, mellow, and loving. Unredeemed evil is dealt with only in the unforgettable instance of selfishness in "A Wet Day." Strangely, the devil's disciple wears priest's robes, but the Church comes into its own in other stories.

Each one of the tales in "At Sallygap" is a complete entity. The reader becomes so entirely enmeshed in mood and in character that transference from one story to the next is accomplished with a grudging reluctance.

Miss Lavin's scenes are either in the country or the small towns. Conscious of the city as a force, her characters are drawn even further afield. They long for places, for comprehending relationships, or for a certain way of life. "At Sallygap" deals with Manny Ryan's disavowal of his dreams when he breaks his fiddle, gives up his trip to Paris, marries Annie, and lives to see love turn to thick hate. Fear, spiritual withdrawal, and no mutual touch between mother and daughter drive one child into a convent in "A Nun's Mother" and another to the sanctuary of her father's study in the sensitive "A Cup of Tea." In "The Will" we get pride and real goodness transcending petty alienating family jealousies, and in the exceedingly moving "A Happy Death" exquisitely answered prayers go unrecognized due to misconception of desires.

"The Haymaking" tells of a farmer and his wife living the very life they want but refusing to see it, while poor "Brother Boniface," longing only for contemplative repose, is known for his excessive industry. Told almost as a liturgy, employing emotionally repetitious phrases, "The Green Grave and the Black Grave" sings of death and burial among fisher folk. Still another note is struck in "Sarah," written in the great peasant tradition of Hardy.

Miss Lavin writes with a lovely lilt. She deals reverently with fundamentals. Her prose is as polished, as neat, as perfectly detailed as a Dutch interior. Subtle imagery and colorful word choices etch her pages vividly. Sad as is man's lack of vision, we are willing listeners to this persuasive voice reminding us of that lack.


Name Philip Schuyler Green
Nationality American
Occupation Newspaperman
Religion Episcopa- Jewish
COMMENT
Posed as a Jew in order to carry out magazine editor's assignment. Lived a lifetime in 8 incredible weeks. Gambled chance to be happy with girl named Kathy. Whole story found in— "GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT"
New novel by Laura Z. Hobson
Simon and Schuster, publishers. $2.75

Uncomic Errors

JIMMY POTTS GETS A HAIRCUT. By George Panetta. Illustrated by Reisie Lonette. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 190 pp. $2.

Reviewed by JACK IAMS

THIS slight little book of some forty thousand words is intended as a comedy of misapprehension, mainly among the foreign-born of Bleecker Street. A truck comes mildly close to hitting little Jimmy Potts and, somehow, the idea gets around the neighborhood that he really has been hit. A bewildered cop duly records it as a hit-run case, and the misunderstandings pile up until they creep into Mayor LaGuardia's Sunday broadcast. Things are finally straightened out, or, to put it less kindly, they peter out. Mr. Panetta seems to think it's a very amusing situation. I don't, and there's no use throwing "Tom Sawyer" in my teeth.

When Mayor LaGuardia's voice enters the story, Mr. Panetta achieves a moment of really bright satire. Unluckily, he is so pleased with it himself that he does the whole thing again, at far greater length and, this time, with a trowel. Mr. Panetta writes with refreshing simplicity and he has a remarkable ear for melting-pot-ese. There are some sharp scenes in the book. But every time I started to enjoy myself, Mr. Panetta spoiled it with an out-of-key guffaw. His gibes at Catholicism, for instance, struck this haphazard Protestant as being in singularly poor taste. Also his gibes at child psychology.

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When Life Was Serene

RIGHT AS RAIN. By Bernice Richmond. New York: Random House. 1946. 211 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

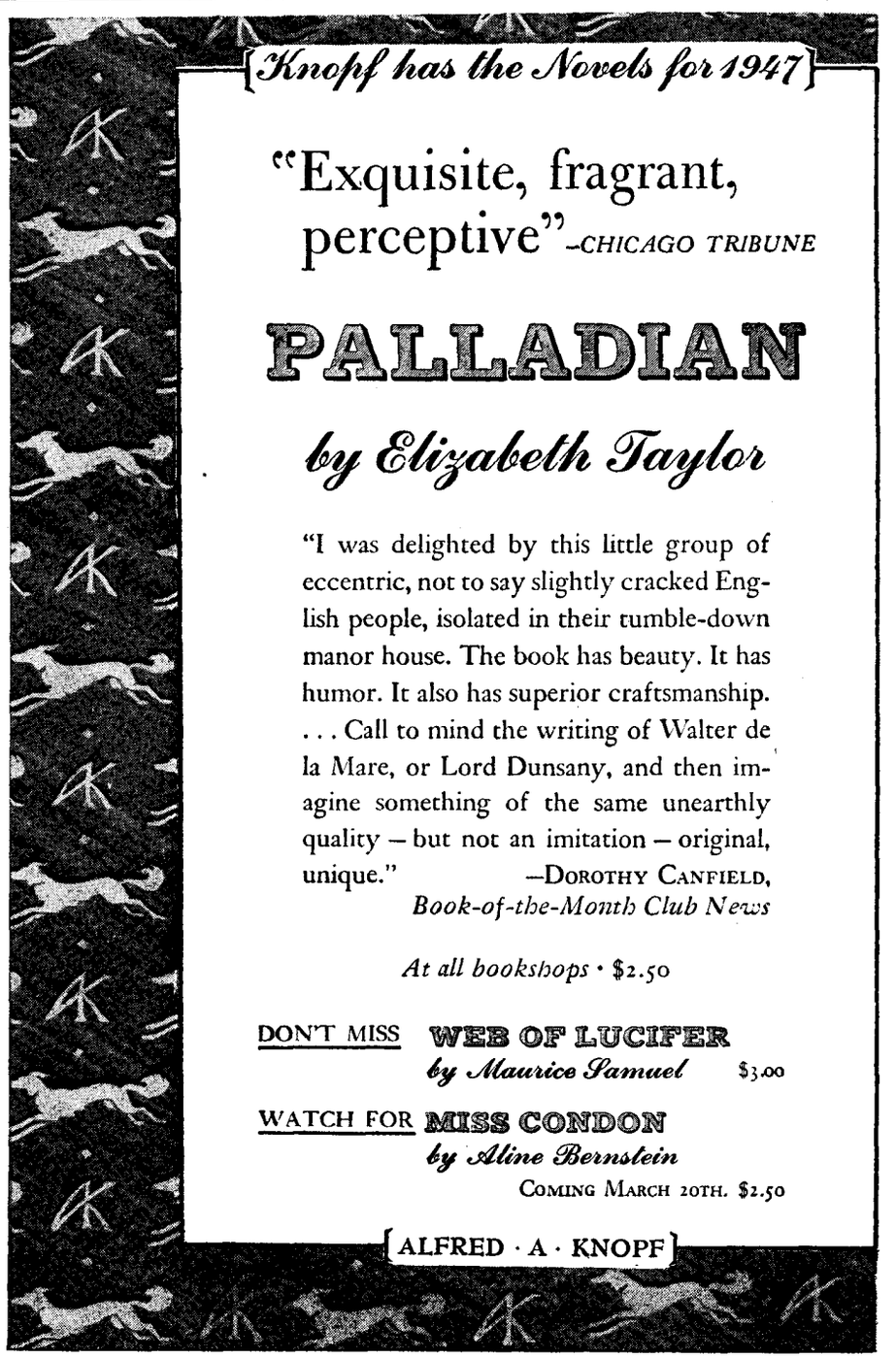
THIS is a book of memories, the memories of a childhood at Livermore Falls, Maine, and of the grandmother and grandfather living in the Yellow House whose verandah overlooked the road below, the bridge, the dam, the pulp mills, and the town across the river. There in the rocker on fine afternoons sat Grammy surveying her world. She was an enormous woman, dressed in a Mother Hubbard, tied about the middle with a white starched apron. Her feet were encased in moccasins, lined with sheepskin, and her hair had been slicked back with a wet comb repeatedly dipped in a glass of water. So much for the massive and dignified figure of Grammy but the picture would be incomplete without some small granddaughter gripped to a huge knee while she was fed thin slivers of apple, or maple syrup and buttered bread from a saucer. The portrait of the old woman is given with great warmth and actuality, if sometimes rather slowly, and the contrast with the neat and energetic grandpa is touching. Grandpa's world was the office, the church, and the town. Grammy's was the house and the young things she fostered in it. The quality of Grammy is deepened by her Indian blood, although the paragraph about old-time Indian courtings which began with the young man "rubbing down his two best ponies until they shone like satin" has a Western, rather than a Maine, sound. I never heard of a Maine Indian with a horse, as they were usually trappers and woodsmen. If one occasionally turned farmer, he might have had a plow horse or even two, under extraordinary circumstances, but it is hard to imagine his "choosing" two "ponies" of any sort.

The rest of the family moves in outline in the background, lively young women in the pompadours and the starched shirtwaists of the early 1900's, and more nebulous young men, including a restless father, who bought the first automobile in Livermore Falls and furthermore allowed his eight-year-old daughter to drive it alone to show Grammy. The beginning of the book has the unity of a world seen through the eyes of a young child. The latter half is more scattered in its effects. The adoption of the little orphan Mildred and her bringing-up are somewhat of an anticlimax, though one must admit life presents many such examples.

"Right As Rain" would be the better for more incidents, or for a little more suspense or surprise. Grammy first and last seems to have lived an extraordinarily uneventful life. And yet the total effect of the book is not thin. There is a rich serenity about Grammy which the author has caught fully. One sees the vast figure moving through sunny rooms, always with a child at its skirts. Kindness flows out from Grammy even when she is silent. And when she speaks to the little girl, it is with an immense gusto or with a quick delicacy of feeling which linger on in the reader's mind, long after the words are forgotten.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. three; seven. 2. three; twentieth. 3. a thousand; one. 4. four. 5. six hundred. 6. a thousand. 7. one; two. 8. seven. 9. a hundred. 10. three. 11. twenty. 12. two; four. 13. a million. 14. five. 15. eight. 16. six. 17. fifteen. 18. ten thousand. 19. a thousand thousand. 20. seven.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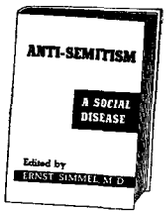

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Preface by Gordon W. Allport

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M-15

NEW EDITIONS

ROSAMOND LEHMANN'S "Dusty Answer" and "Invitation to the Waltz" (Reynal & Hitchcock, $2.50 each) seem to me even better on second reading than when I first read them in 1927 and 1932 respectively. "Talent," says Maupassant in an essay referred to below, "is the product of originality, which is a special manner of thinking, seeing, understanding, and judging." This kind of originality Miss Lehmann possesses to a remarkable degree, and the world of "Dusty Answer" and "Invitation" is its literary projection. The characters of other novelists could not breathe in this world, for its air and light and life are the creations of Miss Lehmann's special manner of performing all the acts which Maupassant mentions. This author knows how to make her readers free of her domain. She knows how to communicate and convince, how to share the findings of her extraordinary sensibility. "Dusty Answer," with its complex emotional pattern, is far more ambitious than "Invitation," but the hand which sketched Olivia Curtis—so intensely and often amusingly alive on the verge of womanhood—is perhaps even surer than the one which essayed a full-length study of Judith Earle, accompanied by the figures of the Fyfes and Jennifer. Certainly no writer ever possessed a surer ear than the one responsible for the dialogues, so various and so subtly accented, of "Invitation." Having returned to these novels, I am at a loss to understand why I have not read their successors from the same pen.

Lewis Galantière has put together "The Portable Maupassant" (Viking Press, $2) with knowledge, intelligence, and discrimination. He has induced a few of the most familiar tales, for, as he says, it would have been sheer affectation to exclude them; but he has given his volume variety and novelty by also including a number of the less famous stories, a revealing travel diary, a batch of the author's letters, an essay on the novel (in the shape of the preface to "Pierre et Jean"), and his own excellent introduction. In the last Mr. Galantière emphasizes the ties which bound Maupassant to Normandy, and justifies an editorial taste which gives more space to the tales of country life than to the clever stories of fashionable intrigue. The latter may serve as more popular bedtime reading, but the former are instinct with "the essence of Maupassant's enduring work: love of place, recognition of human frailty, economy of statement, and readiness not to sit in judgment upon men—implied compassion." Mr. Galantière again scores soundly when he relates Maupassant's apparent selfishness to the decade of intense creative effort which drained the author of all the emotional substance he had to give, "leaving him incapable of giving himself to men and women in any other fashion." Many of the best fruits of that effort—and how good they are!—will be found in this admirable little "Portable," dedicated to Ernest Boyd.

Notable among recent Modern Library Giants is "The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne and the Complete Poetry of William Blake," reprinted from the Nonesuch Press editions, with a new introduction by Robert Hillyer ($1.75). It is an interesting experiment, this binding together of the man of mind with the man of vision, but I wonder how many readers will find the two speaking with equal power. "Donne's poetry is analytic; Blake's is rhapsodic," writes Mr. Hillyer. "Donne fashions the metaphor; Blake seizes upon the symbol. Donne is companionable through a long period of uncertainty; Blake dismisses the sudden crisis." The reader who likes hard but brilliant thinking may not find satisfaction in intuition, while the lover of clouds may be repelled by intellectual precision. But the whole reader, if there is any such creature, will in the presence of both men know himself to be in the presence of genius.

Rex Stout's first novel, "How Like a God" (Vanguard Press, $2.50), originally published in 1929, is an ingeniously constructed story, heavily charged with sex, which is notable chiefly for its sinister portrait of Millicent, a *femme fatale*, whose amorous technique—lavishly hinted at, but never bluntly described—is fatal to the book's tormented, driven hero. Milly is worth meeting. . . . Two of the most delightful imaginative flights of our time may be enjoyed in the Penguin combination edition (25c) of David Garnett's "Lady Into Fox" and "A Man in the Zoo." . . . And to your Bantam Book list (25c) add Steinbeck's "Cannery Row."

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
MOZART, SYMPHONY #41 ("JUPITER"). Toscanini, NBC Symphony. Victor M 1080 (4) $4.85	Extremely heavy, brilliant recording. Highs seem more extensive, less exaggerated than in other recent Victors.	A	A dynamic reading of a dynamic work, and welcome. Lyric aspects sound better in other, less tense, versions. Good idea to have several versions of this—no one does full justice.
BEETHOVEN, SYMPHONY #6 ("PASTORAL") Walter, Phila. Orch. Columbia M 631 (4) $5.	Phila. orchestra is not quite as well recorded as N. Y. Philharmonic, but this is still a fine job.	A—	A sympathetic, unaffected, natural performance—most satisfactory to date. (See *SRL* Apr. 20, 1946, for three other 6ths.)
BRAHMS, PIANO CONCERTO #1, Op. 15. Serkin, Pittsburgh Symph. Reiner. Columbia M 652 (7) $8.	Powerful, resonant recording, full-range; strings bit pinched, woodwinds fine. Piano percussive, though well balanced.	A—	Brahms by two great Beethoven players—Schnabel is incomparably better here. Serkin evidently hasn't the expansive Brahms temperament. Reiner's orch. is fiery, more eloquent than Szell's.
Comparison: (SAME.) Schnabel, London Philh. Szell. Victor M 677 (6) $6.85	Rather "dead" acoustically for European recording, but piano here is far better. Balance excellent.	A—	
MUSIC OF ALEC WILDER. Columbia String Orch. and woodwind soloists. Frank Sinatra conducts. Columbia M 637 (3) $3.85	A fine, bland recording with good balance for solo instruments.	A—	Wilder has genuine musical talent from any viewpoint; this is well made if imitative "mood" music, beautifully written for solo instrs. Preferable to some loudly touted new "highbrow" music!

LOW-PRICED CRYSTALS

AS things stand now the radical developments in the phonograph field, long since announced, are still beyond the average buyer's horizon. They come on special order, or in the super-quality range, and few catalogues even list them. However, numerous small improvements have appeared in existing standard-type equipment that are well worth knowing about—if you can locate them.

Unfortunately, manufacturers are selling both improved and older type equipment side by side, and prices will give you little indication of which is which. Take the reasonably priced crystal pick-up. The best new crystals have a considerably extended frequency range for the money, and they are really lightweight—averaging around an ounce needle pressure. Several new gadgets such as the nylon pick-up give more easy response to loud passages. But, to take one major company, here is the situation. The crystal cartridge with the widest response in this company's line (to 10,000) does not appear so far in any of its regular assembled pick-ups, though it will fit in several of the arms, and presumably is available on special order. The company's assembled pick-ups include lightweight crystals that range to seven or eight thousand cycles; but some models are far more limited and weigh considerably more. One model, popular since before 1940, weighs more than twice what a pick-up should now, and reproduces not a sound over 4,000 cycles. Yet its fancy tubular chromium trim and reversible head make it one of the most expensive standard pick-ups that the company offers.

In defense of this and other makers, let it be said hastily that, for one thing, the lighter, wider range units are less powerful, may not give enough voltage for weak amplifiers; and more, it is obvious that a wider range pick-up is out of the question for large numbers of machines now in use—better to suppress the highs altogether than bring them through horribly distorted! *Caveat emptor.*

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M 15

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the Phoenix Nest

ORPHAN HOUR

DO you remember how we lay
Silent together in the grass
When it was neither night nor day
Watching that orphan hour pass?

And all about us, stretching far,
The daisies waited, elbow-tall.
The air above advanced one star
To gleam there, hesitant and small.

The quiet stunned us where we lay;
We held our breath, though not in fear,
Desiring only to delay
The subtle dusk that hovered near.

RAYMOND HOSKEN.

* * *

P. Schuyler Miller of Schenectady, N. Y., writes me:

> Undoubtedly other fellow-travelers in the realm of literary fantasy have by now risen to the "Necronomicon" bait to list others on that shelf of (in)famous and fortunately imaginary books. Francis T. Laney, in an appendix to the second Arkham House volume of H. P. Lovecraft's writing, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep," goes into them in some detail.
>
> Among the magical and forbidden books brought to our attention by Lovecraft and his circle, my own favorites, and the most likely to appear in some bookseller's catalogue of curiosa, are Ludvig Prinn's "De Vermis Mysteriis" and the grim "Unaussprechlichen Kulten" of von Junzt. Laney is my authority for assigning the original Dusseldorf edition of the "Cults" to 1839, and for the Bridewell translation into English of 1845, and the expurgated Golden Goblin Press edition of 1909. I believe that I have also seen reference to an English translation of Prinn's book: undoubtedly Robert Bloch could cast light on this.
>
> In almost the same class, though not so generally used or known, is the "Cultes des Goules" of the Comte d'Erlette.
>
> There are other fragmentary books handed down in more or less inadequate translations from the elder races which were before man. Best known of these is the "Book of Eibon" or "Liber Ivoris," which has existed in Greek and medieval French versions. The "Pnakotic Manuscripts" may not have been generally translated, nor have the "R'lyeh Text," the "Tablets of Nhing," "The Book of Dyzan," "The Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan," and most important, perhaps, the "Celaeno Fragments." Among the first to be recorded in recent times was the "Book of Hali" noted by Ambrose Bierce, Robert W. Chambers's "King in Yellow" is probably based on or derived from one of these older non-human books.
>
> Arkham House, which has done so much to bring the best in the field of modern writing of the weird and supernatural before a general audience, may have a worthy rival in the science fiction field in the young Fantasy Press, founded by Lloyd A. Eshbach at Reading, Pa. Their first book, E. E. Smith's "Spacehounds of IPC," has just reached me, and while its format has not the solid respectability which Banta Press has given to the Arkham House books, it is head and shoulders above the few other non-pro attempts to publish science fiction. Buffalo Book Co. of Providence, R. I., were the first in this area last year with their editions of John Taine's "Time Stream" and Smith's first and most famous novel, "The Skylark of Space," but this venture seems to have gone by the board.
>
> Eshbach brings to Fantasy Press the same kind of broad, intimate knowledge of the science fiction (and for that matter, general fantasy) field that August Derleth took to Arkham House. Like Derleth, he has written it, has apparently been a reader and collector since his cradle days, and has a highly catholic taste.
>
> As a lure, Fantasy Press is arranging to have the first 300 prepaid orders for its limited editions numbered and personally autographed to the purchaser. Their first titles will be novel-length "classics" from the science fiction magazines, *Smith's* and others, but in some cases the authors will expand on their original magazine versions, and in others they will make available manuscripts too "off trail" for the magazines. They may also, if successful, venture into the whimsical vein of fantasy represented by the much lamented "Unknown Worlds," for which Derleth does not particularly care.
>
> My only hope is that these various publishers do not pour out new titles so rapidly as to glut the field. I am now at least three laps behind on Arkham House. After all, what other publisher can legitimately expect readers to buy his entire list?
>
> As you have undoubtedly noted, a Heinlein story of high space recently made the pages of the *SEP*. Science fiction has indeed become respectable. Perhaps the public may yet get a glimmering of what happens in the reaction between an atomic bomb and a politician—as the science of fiction writers have been telling the story for pretty nearly a generation.

* * *

And, as to the same general subject, Frederick B. Shroyer, of Los Angeles, California, contributes:

> Speaking of fantastic fiction(!), I wonder how many of your readers remember the numerous stories of this kind authored by the late Professor Garrett P. Serviss? Aside from being an author, he was one of the more eminent of American astronomers of his time. To my taste, they were some of the best stories of this genre that have ever been written. Among them were "A Columbus of Space," "The Moon Metal," "The Second Deluge," and the "Moon Maiden." There were many others, most of which were published only in magazine form, especially in the Munsey publications, roughly between 1906 and 1919.
>
> Before the late unpleasantness I was very greatly interested in compiling a bibliography of fantastic romances, and I received a great amount of very much appreciated help from the kind readers of the *SRL*. When I returned, after four years of fighting and dying for Democracy in the U. S. Air Forces, I found that most of the material collected had gone the way of all such things that were "safely" stored for the duration. However I was very pleased to learn that a Dr. Langley Searles had, independently, compiled such a bibliography. I can heartily recommend this scholarly work of his, having seen several of the mimeographed sheets which have had a limited circulation during the last few years. I don't know that he has decided to release the completed work as yet, or in what form, but I assume that when he is ready he will announce it.
>
> And finally, I'd like to know if anyone could supply me with information as to the whereabouts of any of the above-mentioned Professor Serviss's heirs? I've tried, so far without success, to locate them. Any help at all would be greatly appreciated.

* * *

My profound apologies to John Stapleton Cowley-Brown who in the Mar. 1 Nest was inadvertently referred to as Cowley and his letter attributed to Dr. Hilton Addison Wick.

* * *

THE STORY OF THE GLORY

"His Eyes Have Seen The Glory" in
a *Collier's* article reckoned
Mr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.—February 22nd—
The ghost of Washington said, "Sir!
Your eye's not on the ball.
Bob Taft has seen the glory? Why,
he can't see Lilienthal!
He believed a perjured witness of that
Senator MacKellar.
I think that mentally he's living in
a cyclone cellar."

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 38)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 37)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 677

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

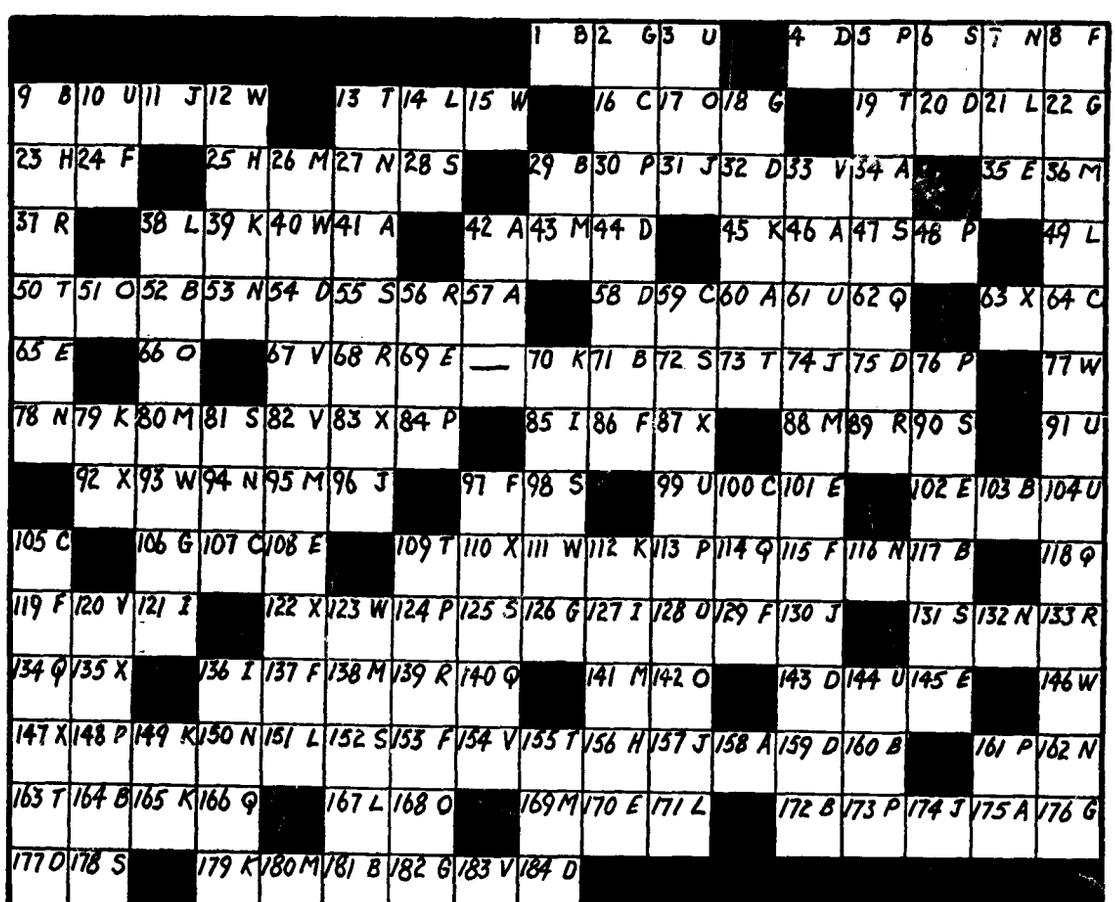
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Jinnah's objective for Moslem India.	175 46 41 158 34 42 60 57
B. Novel by Sir Walter Scott (1824).	9 71 117 29 181 103 160 1 172 164 52
C. Village communities or members of the Wahabi sect in central Arabia.	59 105 100 16 64 107
D. Song by Wolfram to Elizabeth in "Tannhauser" (Wagner; 2 wds.).	44 4 75 32 20 177 58 184 143 159 54
E. Small Oriental rug of about 4 by 6 ft.	65 101 69 102 35 108 145 170
F. Rejection or refusal, as of a request (Slang).	97 86 115 153 137 24 8 119 129
G. Goddess of beauty and wealth, consort of Vishnu (Hinduism).	22 106 126 18 2 182 176
H. Negro tribe of the Slave Coast, or their language.	23 25 156
I. A jolly boat.	121 136 85 127
J. Knight of the Round Table who achieved the quest of the Holy Grail.	130 11 157 31 96 174 74
K. Successor to Latrobe as architect of the National Capitol (1817-30).	70 39 45 179 79 112 165 149
L. Character in "Peer Gynt" who redeems the hero (Ibsen sp.).	151 167 21 49 171 38 14

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. To decline or deteriorate slightly (3 wds.).	80 180 26 88 138 36 141 169 95 43
N. A retail dealer in clothing, haberdashery, and the like.	53 132 94 162 150 7 27 116 78
O. A painted cotton cloth formerly made in India.	51 66 168 142 17
P. A foolish action or utterance.	5 84 161 148 113 30 48 124 76 173
Q. Currently active English Labor Party statesman.	118 62 166 134 114 140
R. Scottish singer whose real name is MacLennan (1870-).	133 56 89 37 68 139
S. To see, especially suddenly, abruptly, or temporarily (3 wds.).	6 72 90 125 81 47 55 178 28 152 98 131
T. Disreputable; frowsy; vulgarian.	73 13 19 163 50 109 155
U. Violet-colored.	128 91 61 99 144 10 104 3
V. To interfere improperly.	33 120 82 154 183 67
W. Lacking feelings and inclinations creditable to man.	77 12 123 111 146 93 40 15
X. To part or separate; to depart (2 wds.).	122 87 92 147 83 63 110 135

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 31 of this issue.

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